TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO

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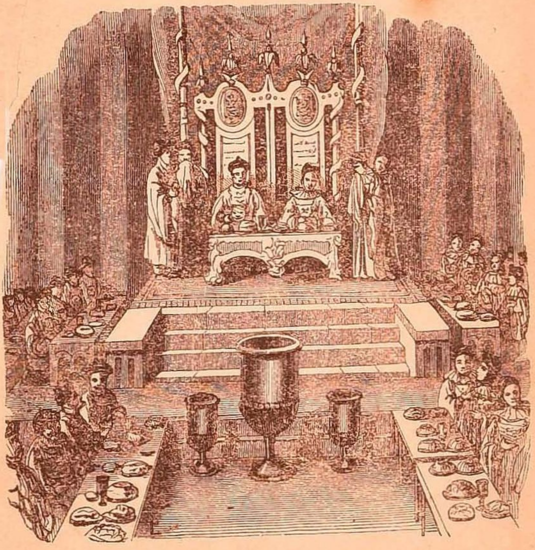

FESTIVAL OF THE GREAT KHAN.

OLIVER & BOYD, EDINBURGH.

THE

TRAVELS

OF

MARCO POLO,

GREATLY AMENDED AND ENLARGED

FROM

VALUABLE EARLY MANUSCRIPTS RECENTLY PUBLISHED BY THE FRENCH SOCIETY OF GEOGRAPHY, AND IN ITALY BY COUNT BALDELLI BONI.

WITH COPIOUS NOTES,

ILLUSTRATING THE ROUTES AND OBSERVATIONS OF THE AUTHOR, AND COMPARING THEM WITH THOSE OF MORE RECENT TRAVELLERS.

BY HUGH MURRAY, F.R.S.E.

TWO MAPS AND A VIGNETTE.

Fifth Edition.

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PREFACE.

Marco Polo has been long regarded as at once the earliest and most distinguished of European travellers. He surpassed every other in the extent of the unknown regions which he visited, as well as in the amount of new and important information collected; having traversed Asia from one extremity to the other, including the elevated central regions, and those interior provinces of China from which foreigners have since been rigidly excluded. "He has," says Ritter, "been frequently called the Herodotus of the Middle Ages, and he has a just claim to that title. If the name of a discoverer of Asia were to be assigned to any person, nobody would better deserve it." The description of the Chinese court and empire, and of the adjacent countries, under the most powerful of the Asiatic dynasties, forms a grand historical picture not exhibited in any other record. His return along the southern coasts of the continent abounds also in curious and novel observations. Doubts, it is well known, were at first raised respecting the accuracy of his statements; but they are now fully proved to

have arisen solely from the fact that his discoveries far transcended the knowledge of his age. In proportion as those distant regions became known, his reports received confirmation; and eminent travellers of recent date have added strong testimonies to his veracity.

The value of his narrative being thus acknowledged, it may seem surprising that no edition of it, in a form generally accessible to the British public, has ever appeared. It exists only in voluminous collections, and in the ponderous though interesting work of Mr Marsden. With a view to supply this defect, the present publication was undertaken.

In the prosecution of this task, it soon appeared that there was room for much more than a mere reprint; and access has been obtained to important materials, unknown to Mr Marsden, or any former British editor. The two versions recently edited by the French Society of Geography, and the early Italian ones by Count Baldelli Boni, are undoubtedly at once more copious and genuine than any before published. They prove that various difficulties, which embarrassed Mr Marsden, and shook the traveller's authority, arose only from the corrupted state of later copies. They contain also a considerable number of additional chapters and passages. By carefully collating them with early editions, and accredited manuscripts in the British Museum, it is hoped that a purer and more complete text has now been produced than any that has hitherto appeared in our language.

To enable the reader to follow satisfactorily the route of the author, and the scope of his narrative, Notes and Illustrations of considerable extent have been introduced. Time has effected such mighty changes on the

names and aspect of those regions, at best imperfectly known, that much research was requisite to ascertain the countries actually visited, and prove the accuracy with which they are described. The Editor readily acknowledges his obligation to the ample materials collected for this purpose by Marsden and Boni. He has, however, in many cases deemed it necessary to refer to original sources, in order to correct or illustrate both these learned writers. Since the date of their publications, too, narratives by eminent travellers, Humboldt, Burnes, Wood, Wellsted, and others, have afforded new means of elucidating the text, and confirming its authenticity. The series of chapters recently printed by the French Society, being unknown to Mr Marsden, could not receive his annotations; but the Editor hopes that, by a collation with Haithon, De Guignes, Malcolm, Price, and other historians, he has proved their agreement with the best Oriental authorities.

Previous to Polo's travels, successive embassies had been sent to the several princes of the Mongol race, then reigning in Central Asia. As their narratives illustrate those of our traveller, a copious abstract of them is prefixed, in which aid has been derived from the versions lately edited by the French Society, and the learned commentary of M. D'Avezac. This introduction, taken in connexion with the text and notes of Marco, will be found to include a complete historical view of the dynasty of Gengis Khan, the most powerful that ever ruled in the East.

A preliminary account is given of the several manuscripts and early editions, from the examination of which the present text has been composed, comprehending an estimate of their respective merits; a task which their

great number and wide variations have rendered by no means easy. Another is prefixed, exhibiting the grounds upon which the authenticity of our adventurer's narrative is established; and it is hoped that some additional proofs have been thereby supplied, and not a few difficulties removed.

A Map of Central Asia has been constructed on a scale suited to the Work, with a view to illustrate the routes both of the early embassies and of Marco Polo; and great care has been taken to render it as accurate as the somewhat uncertain materials would admit. One of China has also been inserted, to enable the reader to follow the traveller through that extensive empire.

EDINBURGH, *April* 1844.

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TRAVELS

OF

MARCO POLO.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

Authenticity of the Work—Manuscripts and Editions Consulted.

Doubts as to Authenticity—Causes—Their temporary Prevalence—How gradually removed—Grounds of Confidence in the Narrative—No prior Source of Information; yet accurate Survey of the Eastern Regions—Recent additional Proofs—Charges against Marco—Miraculous Events—Exaggeration of Numbers—Extraordinary Objects—Omissions—The Great Wall—Tea—His Work not written in a desultory Manner—Fresh Confirmations afforded in this Edition—Manuscripts employed—That published by the French Geographical Society—Its great Value—The Narrative written in French—Rusticien de Pise—Berne MS.—Paris Latin—Ramusio's Edition—Its general Estimation—Followed by Mr Marsden—Shown to be grossly corrupted—Interpolated Passages—Their Errors and Contradictions—By whom probably inserted—Are of some Value—Edition by Pipino—Manuscripts in the British Museum—Grynæus—Müller—First English and French Translations—These include all the most important—Arrangement of the Work.

BEFORE entering on the work of our distinguished traveller, there are certain preliminaries which must be adjusted, in order that the reader may derive due satisfaction from the perusal. These arise chiefly from the period at which the expedition was performed, and the circumstances under which the narrative was published,

When Marco returned from the East, Europe was sunk in profound ignorance, and most of the regions which he had traversed were wholly unknown : hence doubts of the authenticity of his statements arose, and had long an extensive prevalence. It must therefore be desirable, in the first instance, to state the grounds upon which these have been refuted, and the fidelity of his report fully established.

Another circumstance requiring attention is, that the editions, multiplied in an illiterate age when printing was unknown, vary remarkably from one another, and are in many cases extremely corrupted. It will therefore be expedient to submit to the reader the authorities upon which the present text has been established, the different versions consulted, together with an estimate of the value which has been assigned to each.

In every narrative of travels, authenticity is an essential quality, without which it must be altogether worthless. However striking or amusing, it can otherwise be only a romance, and as such tarnished by the attempt to present it under an historical character. He who traverses regions totally unknown to the men for whom he writes, has the power of imposing upon them the belief of wonders, without the danger of detection ; and the pleasure of thus exciting surprise has doubtless tempted some to abuse what has even been termed a traveller's privilege. On the other hand, he is placed in a very painful situation, when his countrymen or readers choose to disbelieve his most veracious statements. He has no evidence to produce in their support ; he can only reiterate assurances, exposed to the mortification of perceiving that they are slightly regarded. There is a species of pride in the supposed detection of fraud, which biases many in favour of scepticism. Of the two errors, we believe this the more frequent, so that an unjust stain still rests on the name of many eminent explorers.

There is no traveller, with regard to whom this controversy has been more largely agitated, than he whose work is now edited. The vastness and distance of the

regions described, and the ignorance of Europe during so many ages respecting them, would have enabled him to hazard the boldest assertions; while, if doubts should have arisen, there were no means by which they could be removed. The sceptical party appears for some time to have predominated, both among the learned and the multitude. For the entertainment of the latter, it is said to have been common to introduce on the stage a personage under the name of Polo, who amused the audience by relating the most ridiculous and extravagant fictions. By the former, according to Müller, the narrative was classed with the Dialogues of Lucian and the Voyages of Pytheas, of which Strabo says, that if they had been written by Mercury himself, he would not have believed them. Even in regard to the navigator now mentioned, we are convinced that he was treated with similar injustice, and that his survey of the British coasts, even to their northern extremity, included discoveries equally real and important.

We are inclined to think that this disbelief was much less prevalent during the life and age of Polo himself. Pipino, who then published his Latin edition, merely expresses an apprehension lest the many uncommon particulars related by him should appear incredible to the inexperienced reader. He refers to the high character borne by Marco and his father, both then alive, adding that his uncle, also a worthy and pious man, had on his deathbed solemnly declared to his confessor the truth of every thing related by his nephew. Indeed, as we shall have opportunities of more fully observing, the steps of the traveller were, during the early part of the fourteenth century, followed by a considerable number both of merchants and churchmen; an archbishopric was even founded at Kambalu or Pe-king. The princes of the great conquering dynasty founded by Gengis, by no means cherished the exclusive spirit usual in Asiatic monarchies, and above all in China. They were, on the contrary, fond of inviting to their court foreigners of all descriptions; and their religious views, liberal almost in extreme, led them to favour alike the pro-

fessors of every creed. A complete change in these several respects ensued before the close of the century. The Tartars were driven out of China by a native race, who re-established the wonted barriers by which that empire has been so jealously guarded. The Mongol princes in Western Asia became converts to Mohammedanism, and concurred with the Turkish sovereigns in hostile exclusion of every thing that bore the Christian name. Europe was thus in a great measure denied intercourse with the East; her merchants, able only with some danger to carry on trade in the ports of the Levant and Black Sea, were excluded from all the interior regions of Asia. Even the narratives of the missionaries, having never been translated from the original Latin nor become objects of popular reading, were no longer in view. All the knowledge of those distant regions came to be considered as resting exclusively on the testimony of Polo, an assertion made even by well-informed writers of that age. As his work contained many particulars very dissimilar to any witnessed by the European nations, whose minds had not been enlarged by commercial and maritime intercourse, it cannot be surprising that an extensive scepticism as to the truth of his statements should at that period have prevailed.

A new scene opened as soon as the Portuguese, with daring enterprise, had rounded the Cape, and speedily made their way to the remotest boundaries of Eastern Asia; for it could no longer be doubted, that kingdoms, great, powerful, and wealthy, existed in the very position which Marco had assigned. Difficulties were felt as to the details, particularly arising from the fact that the traveller, resident in a Tartar court, had given the names used in that country to all Chinese cities, while the native ones had since been restored. Hence only a qualified praise is given even by eminent geographers: yet the rising esteem of the public is marked by the insertion of the narrative in the collections of Grynæus, Ramusio, Purchas, and others formed in the course of the sixteenth century. Martini, who spent many years in China, and first published a detailed description of

that empire, declared himself openly in Marco's favour ; and since that time, his character has continually risen with the progress of oriental knowledge. Very recent travellers, who have ascended into the least accessible heights of the Asiatic continent, express surprise at the striking coincidence of their observations with those made five hundred years before by this renowned explorer.

With the information which we now possess, it is no longer possible to doubt the actual performance of the journey, and the general correctness of the narrative and descriptions. We may remark that there was no prior source whence Marco could have copied, or derived even the smallest assistance ; for, besides that he probably was not a classical scholar, the mention of the Seres and the Sinae in Ptolemy, Pliny, and other ancient writers, was much too slight and vague to have afforded a basis on which to erect a fiction. We are persuaded he never heard those names, or assuredly did not recognise their identity with the countries through which he travelled. The Venetians and Genoese had factories on the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean, and even on the Black Sea ; but there is not the slightest tradition that they had advanced into the more interior countries of Asia. The monkish ambassadors, Carpini and Rubruquis, had, we shall see, penetrated to a great extent eastwards ; but as they proceeded in a more northerly line than that which he followed, they could not have afforded any material help ; and indeed we are persuaded that, in an age of such imperfect communication, they never came under his view. Not only does he never make the slightest allusion to them, but on those occasions where his subject coincides with theirs, he handles it indeed with the correspondence natural in true accounts of the same thing, yet with variations proving his observations to be distinct and independent.

Having thus ascertained that our traveller had no prior source of information, we have only to consider the extreme accuracy of the outline he has drawn of those vast regions over which he journeyed. All

the leading features of the Chinese empire, then altogether unknown, are faithfully exhibited. Its two main streams, the Hoang-ho and Yang-tse-kiang, are shown both in the upper and lower part of their course, and in the latter as crossed by the line of the Great Canal. The principal eastern, and the whole of the western provinces, with the adjacent countries of Thibet and Bengal, are exhibited in their proper order and position. The large cities of Pe-king, Nan-king, Hang-tcheou-fou, Ning-po, Amoy, with many others, are delineated, some of them under Tartar names, but clearly marked out by site and description. The very peculiar condition of the empire at this era, newly overrun by a successful Tartar invasion, its native dynasty being nearly extinguished, accords well with oriental history. In regard to the journey out, without noticing Persia, which could not be wholly unknown in Europe, we find the mountainous and pastoral region and the rich gems of Badakshan, the immensely elevated table-land of Pamier, the cities of Cashgar, Yarcund, and Khoten, the wide and dreary expanse of the great desert, all faithfully described, which could in that age have been done only by one who had personally visited them. In his return through the eastern seas, he makes the first mention of Japan, and of the expedition undertaken against it by Kublai, the actual occurrence of which is confirmed by Chinese authorities. In his passage through the archipelago, indeed, some difficulties occur, which we shall find reason for imputing to the errors of transcribers. Yet the great number and variety of these islands, the periodical voyages performed thither during the monsoon, their peculiar products of gold, rich spices, and odoriferous woods, are entirely accordant with modern experience. In Sumatra, though the order and names of the kingdoms be changed, we recognise its peculiar productions and objects; the camphor, sago, and palm-toddy, as well as the ferocity and cannibal propensities of the people of the interior. India need not be dwelt upon, being probably even then somewhat known, though there is no likelihood that he could have found materials for his accurate

delineation of its coasts. In Eastern Africa he obtained information farther to the south than any of the ancient Alexandrine geographers, and has for the first time mentioned Madagascar. This part of his work, however, being given upon the information of Arab pilots, is in some respects confused and exaggerated.

On these grounds it has for some time been scarcely disputed, that Marco did travel over the East, and has given a correct outline of its various regions. It has still, however, been alleged that in the details he has used to excess the privilege of a traveller, and yielded to a spirit of romance and exaggeration. His narrative, it is true, shows him not insensible to pride in the wonders which he was unfolding to the nations of the west; nor can it be denied that he has introduced some statements from which our belief must be withheld. A candid examination, however, will, we imagine, prove that he made them with perfectly good faith, and only shared that spirit of credulity which was then general over the world, and particularly throughout the East.

The reader cannot fail to be struck by the miraculous legends which are related with the most unhesitating belief. These were, however, completely accredited in that age, and Marco, as a faithful son of the church, which he fully professed to be, could not refuse his assent to them. Mr Marsden remarks, that this was nearly the period of the miraculous transportation of the holy house from Jerusalem to Loretto, where it became the most frequented of the popular shrines. The fancy of the eastern Christians appears to have been at least as warm and as unscrupulous. Yet, however implicit the credence of our traveller in these legends, he proves his good faith by never pretending to have been an eye-witness, or even to have come near to the time and place of their occurrence. In this respect he agrees with Oderic of Portenau, while our countryman Sir John Mandeville professes to have witnessed with his own eyes every marvellous object which he reports. The moving of the mountain near Bagdad by the prayer of a pious

shoemaker, is referred to a date nearly fifty years previous to his wanderings; nor does it clearly appear that he ever visited that capital. The journey of the three magi, and the perpetual fire kindled by the sacred box thrown into a well, belong evidently to a still more distant era. He may be thought indeed to intimate that he saw not only their tombs but their persons in a state of partial preservation; yet this merely implies that three figures, probably chiefs of ancient note, were exhibited in this half-embalmed state. Again, the miraculous elevation of the pillar in the church of Samarcand is a mere hearsay statement; for we think it evident that he never was in that city, but collected his information at Cashgar, three hundred miles distant. It was, moreover, a perplexing article in the creed of the middle ages, that, besides the miracles of which the church required the belief, others of a most awful kind might be performed by the agency of magicians, evil spirits, and demons. Nay, this apprehension continued to prevail among the Romish missionaries even in the seventeenth century; and when encountered by the fraudulent wonders of a pagan priesthood, they durst not disown their existence, but merely hoped to overpower them by a greater agency. Hence the skilful impostures, practised by the professors of the Boodhist superstition, were viewed by Marco as real acts of diabolical power. The most curious is that of the cups represented as rising spontaneously from the floor, and placing themselves before the emperor. This being stated as occurring at crowded festivals, seems to imply that the traveller either witnessed the event personally, or learned it from respectable authority. Mechanical skill, in fact, was adequate to such a contrivance, and was probably tasked in order to overawe the monarch, and secure his favour. Fortunately, on other occasions, the author, attaching an idea of guilt to the very mention of such unhallowed displays, passes them over with a very hasty notice.

The statement, perhaps, which excited most amazement and doubt at the era of publication, was that which

respected the numbers of the people and dimensions of their cities. The extent, magnificence, and population of Quin-sai, the armies and revenues of the great khan, were supposed to pass all the limits of credibility. China having already reached nearly the same height of greatness and civilisation as now, while Europe was still in its infancy, every object in comparison was on an astonishingly grander scale. The greatest monarch in the West, it is probable, had then scarcely a revenue of a million sterling. The estimate of Du Halde, formed seemingly on solid grounds, makes that of China £66,000,000. The simplest statement of facts would thus have appeared to European readers amazing and incredible. Nor is it denied that there was also some considerable exaggeration. Numbers, when spread before the eye, and passing the means of computation, act strongly on the fancy, and excite an impassioned wonder, which leads to extremes. It would not be difficult to prove that in all the histories of the middle ages, especially of the East, the armies and other assemblages are greatly overrated. Those engaged at the battle of Bovines are commonly stated at 150,000, yet Sismondi, by the application of a rigorous criticism, has reduced them to 15,000; and we are persuaded he might have applied a similar scale to other statements equally accredited. Who can believe that in the first crusade 700,000 men could even attempt, without stores or magazines, to march through Eastern Europe,—a region then imperfectly cultivated? The estimates of Sir Alexander Burnes respecting Bokhara and the adjacent regions, show that Timur could never have drawn from them those immense hosts with which he is represented as invading the Turkish dominion. We might probably criticise on a similar ground the boasted armaments of Darius and Xerxes. It is only in very modern times that the arrangements for census and muster have been carried to such perfection, that we can place any precise dependence on their results. Now, Marco did not and could not pretend to have himself counted over those immense numbers. He stated them

as derived from official documents, where there were motives of interest and vanity to swell the amount. The principal, in the case of Quin-sai, is a letter from the fallen queen to the conqueror, written to induce him to spare that mighty capital. The traveller indeed expresses his own opinion of its correctness, but evidently founded on a vague survey, while dazzled by its vast magnitude. We shall, moreover, find occasion to observe, that, in the various copies of the manuscript, numbers have been strangely corrupted; the amount has even, by the addition of a single figure, been multiplied ten times. Thus, a particular distance in Arabia is made in different editions, four, forty, and even four hundred miles.

There are other marvels from which our traveller has incurred reproach. His reputation has been particularly damaged by the *rukh* of Madagascar, a bird to which gigantic proportions are certainly assigned. Here, however, he was describing an object 2000 miles out of his course, and on the information of Arab pilots, whom he must have taken on board at Sumatra. Their warm eastern fancy had been excited by the mention of such a marvellous bird in their favourite work of the Arabian Nights, with which the albatross, or the African condor, might be identified. There is a great variation respecting the number of paces into which the wings expand, and the most marvellous particular of the feather ninety spans long, is found only in the later versions, where we have no doubt it has been interpolated by another hand. He is reproached also with the account he gives of the mode of procuring diamonds, by eagles picking them up when attached to pieces of meat. This too will appear to be a hearsay account, referable to the same sage authorities, whose imagination was fed from the like romantic source. Indeed, Count Baldelli Boni has lately found the statement in a scientific Turkish work, thus fully proving its prevalence in the East, and clearing Marco of any concern in its fabrication.

He stands charged, moreover, with sins of omission,

as not mentioning remarkable objects which ought to have presented themselves to his observation. Mr Marsden considers the most serious of these to be his silence respecting the Great Wall, and inclines to think that a passage descriptive of it must have dropt out in the process of copying. We cannot think this probable, especially after the early and numerous editions that have lately appeared. We expect to prove that the emperor's spring-huntings did not, as the English annotator supposes, extend into Tartary; but his summer palace of Shang-tu certainly lay beyond the wall; and Marco probably at some time accompanied him thither. This great barrier had doubtless been erected centuries before, but by no means in the same substantial shape as at present. For several ages after the entrance of the Tartars, being of no political value, it was probably allowed to go to decay, and perhaps even demolished where a thoroughfare was desirable. It was by the Yuen dynasty, after the expulsion of those conquerors, that it was restored, and brought to its present perfection.

Mr Marsden notices the absence of any mention of *tea*, the use of which had been fully established. We shall find, however, that the traveller had little social intercourse with the Chinese, but almost exclusively with the Tartars, whose habits and ideas were wholly different. I am convinced, too, that the "wine of spices," repeatedly mentioned, at least included tea. The term spice will be found to have had a much more comprehensive meaning than at present, extending even to sugar; and we are not aware that the Chinese spirits are flavoured with any aromatic ingredient. The "country wine, constantly made fresh," is manifestly tea.

Even those, however, who admit the prevailing honesty and correctness of the author's observations, still charge his itinerary statements as rambling, incoherent, and often erroneous. Martini, though he generally defends the narrative, says:—"He follows no regular order, but describes objects in an interrupted manner, and as it were by leaps." Forster makes a similar charge, in

which Mr Marsden concurs.* The present editor, after a careful examination of the purer editions, and comparison with what is known of the countries surveyed, is convinced that these errors are chiefly those of the commentators themselves, misled in many cases by the imperfect and corrupt versions to which alone they had access. Mr Marsden, from this latter cause, thinking himself obliged to admit some important mistakes, gave up, unfortunately, all expectation of finding an accurate and consistent itinerary. Hence, wherever there appeared any correspondence of name or description, he thought himself entitled to suppose any errors, however enormous, as to distance and direction. Even when a little attention would have shown a site altogether accordant with the description, he preferred one very remote and improbable. When, however, on a careful examination of the former edition, we found that the grosser errors disappeared, the idea was conceived, that a correct and consistent itinerary of the whole expedition might be formed. Allowing for some errors of transcription, which probably still remain, for a somewhat loose mode of stating the directions, and for our own ignorance of many of the regions described, this seems to have been realized by us, as far as could reasonably be expected. The route through China, and through Central Asia, has, it is apprehended, been very distinctly made out, commencing at Balkh. Before reaching that city, it is scarcely presented in a regular shape, though the general direction may be traced. In the voyage homeward, much is stated from hearsay, and the errors of transcription appear particularly numerous; but attempts have been made to clear up the difficulties. The voyage round Sumatra will perhaps, by an easy supposition, appear to have been made in a natural and probable course, instead of those irregular starts and movements which Mr Marsden supposes; and his consequent censure upon Marco for the mode of treating that island will prove unfounded.

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* Müller, p. 16. Marsden, p. 236.

A collation with the purer editions has also shown, that several marvellous statements, which have most shaken the traveller's credit, were superadded by faithless editors, seeking thus falsely to enhance the interest of their publication. The ninety-span feather of the rukh, as already observed, is only found in very modern editions. To the terrific appearances described in the passage of the great desert, similar extravagant additions have been made, which, when pruned away, leave only such impressions as might naturally haunt the minds of those obliged to traverse so formidable a region. The editor may add, as mentioned in the preface, that recent narratives, especially of expeditions made by our adventurous countrymen into Central Asia, have confirmed some of Marco's most important statements. He may thus flatter himself, that the authenticity of this illustrious traveller will now be established more firmly than ever, and on a solid basis.

We now proceed to make some observations on the manuscripts and editions out of which the text has been derived. In all works composed before the invention of printing, and circulated in manuscript, not even excepting the sacred scriptures, a great number of various readings occur. These, however, usually form mere objects of critical curiosity, without affecting the body or substance of the composition. They consist frequently in the omission or insertion of a particle, or the substitution of one synonyme for another. But in the work now edited, the variations are so great as to convert the several editions almost into distinct tracts. Long passages and chapters, omitted in one, are inserted in another, and the most important facts are reported in contradictory shapes. An elaborate critical examination is therefore necessary, before we can hope to give the text in any degree of purity.

These wide variations appear to have arisen from the very great popularity of the work in an age when not only printing was unknown, but the art of writing

very little diffused. In multiplying copies, the general tendency was to curtailment, which was prompted even by the great care and splendour with which many of the manuscripts were prepared. Their production was accordingly both laborious and expensive, and it was even an object to economize the rich material of vellum, on which many were written. This appears clearly in an elegant MS. in the British Museum, where, at the conclusion of Polo's travels, a new work is begun on the same page, and even the same column. The reduction is usually effected by merely omitting such passages as, often with very little reason, were deemed of inferior interest. Thus, indeed, what remained was preserved pure; but it was exhibited in a very disjointed form; and injudicious attempts were afterwards made by others to supply the obvious deficiencies. These unseemly gaps usually increase towards the close; either because the writer became tired of his task, or that the allotted space was nearly exhausted. The most celebrated of the early editions, being the translation into Latin by Pipino, is little better than an epitome. It is curious, too, that all the copies printed in the Italian language which Mr Marsden could trace were mere popular abridgments.*

In 1559 appeared the second volume of Ramusio's collection, in which is inserted an edition much more full than any then in circulation. It immediately became the standard one, being used by Purchas for his Pilgrims, and thence copied into most of the similar publications. Mr Marsden has employed it almost exclusively, quoting in its favour the opinions of Robertson and Vincent.† It was probably the best within his reach; but important materials have since been published, which

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* Apostolo Zeno speaks in high terms of the one first published in 1490 (Fontanini, Biblioteca d'Eloquenza Italiana, Ven. 1753, p. 270-273); but Mr Marsden, who seems to have examined more carefully, declares it merely "calculated to surprise and amuse an ignorant reader." (Introduction, p. lxiii-lxv.)

† Introduction, p. xxx.

prove, in our apprehension, that it and all the others were both defective and corrupted.

In 1824, the Geographical Society of Paris published editions of two manuscripts preserved in the Royal Library. The first is in very old and rude French, —nearly unintelligible but for the aid of an excellent glossary,—and the rules of grammar and orthography far from being duly observed. It has been copied so carelessly, that proper names are seldom spelt twice in the same manner, but sometimes in three different modes in the course of one chapter. The editor will own that he began his examination rather from curiosity than with any hope of deriving much new light from it. He had not long continued the collation, however, when he became sensible of its decided superiority to the previous editions, Ramusio's included. This appeared evident, when itinerary statements, which in the latter were wholly inconsistent with the features of the region, and had thrown Mr Marsden into extreme perplexity, were here given in a shape which rendered them perfectly correct and consistent. In particular, the connexion between the western and south-eastern routes through China, which that gentleman considered it utterly impossible to trace, is shown in the clearest possible manner. Other serious perplexities are elucidated in a manner equally satisfactory; and the editor hopes by these means to have established the whole itinerary through China as uniformly correct. Even the blemishes of this edition appeared on consideration as affording inferences in favour of its genuineness. The colloquial style used to a great extent, the verbose language, the repetition of the same sentences in nearly the same words;—such redundances were little likely to have been superadded, especially at a time when abridgment was so much studied. They bore rather the marks of being the first rough state in which the narrative had been produced.

On procuring from the Continent additional materials, the editor had the satisfaction to find that the same

favourable opinion had there been generally formed. Nay, it has become the prevailing impression, that French is the language in which the narrative was originally written. He will own that this idea, when first presented, was repelled by him as devoid of all probability. M. Parris, however, the learned editor of the French Chronicles, observes, that what appears most probable is not always best supported by evidence. It is indeed remarkable, that this conclusion was first maintained by a learned Italian. Count Baldelli Boni, in editing the Crusca, the earliest and best of the Italian MSS., and collating it with the Pucci, supposed to rank next in antiquity, found in both the clearest marks of their being translated from a French original. This transpired in consequence of blunders evidently caused by a very imperfect knowledge of that language. Thus, *cheveux* (hairs) is translated *horses*, *très* (very) *three*, *boue* (mud) *oxen*. Mention being made of one who was *jadis roi* (formerly king), the translator makes it *King Jaddis*, a prince whose reign is nowhere else recorded. *Sel*, *le roi*, and other French terms, are given unaltered. In explaining Oriental terms, it is repeatedly said: "Vale dir in Francese."* All this would scarcely have satisfied us, but for a very curious discovery made by M. Parris. He has found that Rusticians, the prison-companion of Polo, and who at least aided in writing his narrative, was a native of France, and author of a French book of considerable magnitude. It is an abridgment of all the histories connected with the Round Table, and has prefixed to it a preface or prologue, which, allowing for the difference of subject, is almost identical with that which precedes the narrative of Polo.† M. Parris mentions it only as existing in MS.; but there is a printed edition, which, as well as another work equally voluminous by the same author, the editor has had an

* Il Millione, Introduction, cxxxi. Recueil de Voyages, &c., par la Société de Géographie, vol. iv. p. 408.

† Journal Asiatique, September 1833, pp. 250, 251.

opportunity of inspecting.* This Rusticians, indeed, called there Rusticien, appears to have been a person of no small eminence in his day, and particularly distinguished by the patronage of English monarchs. From Mr D'Israeli's researches we learn, that Henry III. presented him with two handsome chateaux;† and his second work is stated in the preface to have been composed at the urgent request of Edward I. From these circumstances, it appears no longer doubtful that this celebrated narrative was originally written in French.

This manuscript was mentioned by M. Langlès to Mr Marsden, as bearing date about 1300, with an offer of every facility for consulting it; of which the latter, with reason, regrets that he was not able to avail himself.‡ M. Parris describes it as evidently belonging to the first years of the fourteenth century; while the character of the writing, the style of the coloured initials, the rudeness of the parchment, indicate to a practised eye that it must have been copied in Italy.§ There is a curious notice on a MS. in the public library at Berne, stating the Lord de Cepoy to have received it, in 1307, from Marco Polo himself, to be presented to Charles of Valois, second son of the King of France, who, in right

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* Gyron de Courtois, avecques la devise des armes de tous les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde. Gothic letter, folio, 339 pages (openings, 4 columns each), no date nor publisher's name.

The following is the prologue :—

Seigneurs, Empereurs, Roys, Princes, Ducs, Contes, Barons, Chevaliers, Vicontes, Bourgeois, et tous les grand hommes de cestui monde, qui talent avez et desir de vous delecter en rommans, prenez cestuy-ci et le factes lire de chief en chief, so aurez parties de toutes les grands advantures du temps du Roy Merpendragon, &c.

Meliadus de Leonnoys. Ensemble plusieurs autres nobles proesses de chevalerie factes par le Roy Artus, Palamedes, Galan, &c., folio, 199 pages, 4 columns each. Gassiot du Pre. Paris, 1521.

† Amenities of Literature, vol. i. p. 103. The learned author, however, is quite at a loss who Rusticien was.

‡ Introduction, p. lxix.

§ Journal (as above), p. 249.

of his wife, claimed the throne of Constantinople, and therefore took a deep interest in Oriental affairs. The expressions would seem to attach this incident to the Berne MS., which Mr Marsden justly rejects; but there may be truth in the story, though thus wrongly applied. The language used, "see here *the* book," seems to refer, as to a known fact, that there was a book thus transmitted. In that case, there can be little doubt of its being the one in question. M. D'Avezac mentions in corroboration, that there is another MS. in the Royal Library (10,270), in which the same narrative is contained, and that the present one came from the old library of the kings of France at Blois.*

The society have also published, in the same volume, a Latin MS., found in the royal collection. From the description, we were led to suppose it the one mentioned by Apostolo Zeno, as being in the possession of the writers styled the Order of Preachers; and this opinion is confirmed by Count Boni.† We agree with him that the publication of this also has been a valuable boon to literature. It is much more copious than Pipino, or than any other known Latin version; and it displays a considerable agreement with the French, though evidently not so ancient. It has several of the additional chapters found in this last; also the prologue, which decidedly marks an early copy; and it explains with equal clearness the connexion between the two Chinese journeys. At the same time, it is better arranged in books and chapters, while it is pruned of repetitions and redundances. This being the case, and as our present object is to produce, not a mere antiquarian curiosity, but a book fitted for general perusal, we have taken it as the basis of our text, carefully incorporating, however, all the additional information contained in the French version;

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* Marsden, Introd. p. lxvii. Recueil de Voyages, &c., vol. iv. pp. 409, 410. Boni, Il Millione, Introd. p. cxxx.

† Fontanini, Biblioteca Italiana, p. 272. Marsden, Introd. p. lvi. Boni, Introd. p. cxxxiii.

and where a difference exists, usually preferring its authority. A good deal even of its colloquial tone has been retained, as giving to the narrative an original and even lively character.

It remains to estimate the edition of Ramusio, published, as already stated, in 1559, as part of his Collection of Voyages and Travels, and which has been almost exclusively followed by Mr Marsden. The most remarkable circumstance in this version is, that, while it wants a number of chapters found in the French and other early ones recently edited, it contains many long passages and even chapters not found in them or any other edition, either MS. or printed. This did not appear very wonderful to Mr Marsden, who had seen only abridged and mutilated versions; but now that we are supplied with others as copious as they are early and pure, it appears very mysterious how he obtained possession of so much additional matter. Yet Count Boni, after editing the two oldest Italian versions, considers his as still the best, and has reprinted it in the same work. He is obliged indeed to admit, that these passages could not exist in the original MS. written by Rusticians; but he has formed a theory, that Polo, after returning to Venice, revised and new-modelled the whole, making the additions in question; and that a copy, in this more perfect state, reached the Venetian editor.* M. Klaproth expresses his concurrence in this opinion,† which, it appears, from a communication with which M. Jomard has favoured us, he always retained. It is not without great diffidence that the editor dissents from such high authorities; yet a very careful collation has led him to the conclusion, that certainly a great part, and probably the whole, of this additional matter is interpolated by a foreign hand. The grounds of this

* Il Millione, Introd. p. viii-xvi.
† Journal Asiatique, September 1833, p. 252-254.

judgment shall be fully stated, to enable the reader to judge for himself.

1. We refer to the gross itinerary errors already mentioned, and in regard to which this edition is even somewhat more faulty than any other. A similarly unfavourable change has taken place in regard to important matters of fact. But can we suppose that Marco would deliberately vitiate his own narrative; and that he substituted erroneous statements instead of the correct ones which he had originally written or communicated to Rusticians? Is it not certain rather that these errors were introduced by the ignorance of subsequent copyists or editors?

2. In the passages peculiar to Ramusio, opinions and sentiments are expressed diametrically opposite to those which pervade all the rest of the narrative. Nothing is there more conspicuous than the profound and admiring veneration with which the Emperor Kublai is every where mentioned. On the contrary, in the chapter on the conspiracy of Achmac, found only in that writer, a very hostile disposition prevails. It is there stated that "his reign was universally detested by the people of Cataya," p. 122. Yet in a few chapters after, it is said (in every edition), that "he is adored by them as a god." Can we suppose that Marco, in revising his work, would give his sanction to opinions thus contradictory, allowing the former and opposite ones to remain? In the two characters of the King of Manji, the contrast between the general one and that found only in Ramusio is almost equally striking.

3. We may remark the singular ignorance of this editor respecting the manner in which the narrative was produced. His supposition, that it was originally written in Latin, need not be refuted, since it is given up by his warmest supporters. He boasts of having seen many early MSS., but dwells chiefly upon one in that language "of marvellous antiquity," which he flattered himself had been copied from another in the hand-

writing of Marco.* When he attached to this MS. such a high and illusory value, it could not appear of much importance to examine others supposed later, and mere translations. There are, in fact, few traces of such research or collation. He gives a professed copy of the original prologue; but it differs essentially from that found in all the earlier editions. No mention is made of the agency of Rusticians, which yet is stated in the two Paris,† the Soranzo, the Berne, three French and one Italian in the Bibliothèque Royale, and the first English printed edition by Frampton. There is now no doubt that such agency was employed; but Ramusio remained wholly ignorant of it, and has circulated throughout Europe the story of Marco being aided by a Genoese visiter, for which there appears no sort of foundation.

4. We shall finally notice various sentences and expressions scattered through the work, which appear clearly to come from another pen. The following, though not of great consequence, proves unequivocally the existence of a system of adulteration. Mention is made of a vegetable (the turmeric), as highly valued by the inhabitants, "from being an ingredient in all their dishes." Mr Marsden is obliged to own, that it seldom if ever is so employed in China, but solely and largely as a dye-stuff. Now the two Paris editions expressly state its chief use is for *manufacture* (*por ovre*, in the one, *ad operandum*, in the other). This reason is omitted in the abridged Latin editions; and a writer working upon one of them, has evidently thought he could improve it by inserting that erroneous explanation. Again, when Kublai is represented receiving favourable predictions

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* Navigationi e Viaggi, vol. ii. (1565), pref. p. 7. It is somewhat curious, that in the edition of 1583, published by Giunti, after Ramusio's death, this passage is expunged. Hence it probably never came under the view of Mr Marsden, who used the latter edition.

† The Crusca and the Pucci both want several of the first chapters.

from his astrologers, all the early editions treat them as real; but in Ramusio, an intimation is made that it was a mere stratagem to encourage his men. Such a flight appears to us decidedly beyond the age of Polo, who shows elsewhere that he shared all its credulity. Generally speaking, indeed, the reflections which pervade this edition are out of keeping with the rest, and wholly absent in the earlier versions. I am indeed convinced, that literary attainments, very rare in that age among the laity, were possessed in only a slender degree by this great traveller. It seems difficult otherwise to account for his adopting such a strange and defective mode of making public his narrative, as that which Rusticians afforded. Ramusio, it is true, in his erroneous prologue, and in other passages, alludes to notes taken during his journey; but no mention of them is found in any other edition, and I greatly doubt if they ever existed.

There is, however, an argument used by Mr Marsden, which deserves great consideration. The facts stated in the most doubtful of these passages are confirmed by good Chinese and other oriental authorities; and it is asked, whence, in that age, could they have been derived but from Polo himself? Count Boni states that, after a good deal of hesitation, this argument had determined him to consider them as genuine. M. Klaproth was doubtless swayed by the same motive. These learned writers, however, have altogether overlooked the circumstance, that during the fourteenth century a very active communication was carried on between Europe and China. The emperors of the Mongol dynasty did not enforce the exclusive system now practised; on the contrary, we shall see them filling their courts with men of every nation and every creed. About the time when the Poli departed, Juan de Monte Corvino, a Minorite friar, reached Kambalu, where he was allowed to build two churches, and could boast of some converts. In 1314, he was created archbishop of that city, and other priests were sent out to act as bishops and suffragans. In 1330, he died, and a

new primate was named.* The same year, the khan sent Andrew, a monk, with fifteen companions, on an embassy to the Pope.† It is not exactly known when or how this establishment was broken up ; it may probably have been effected upon the expulsion of the Tartars by a native Chinese dynasty. In 1335, Pegoletti, an Italian, published an itinerary from Tana, on the Black Sea, to Pe-king. It is a mere list of places, with the distances and expenses, such as he would scarcely have thought of making known, had it not been a route in some degree frequented. There would thus be ample materials for interpolating genuine information even into early editions. Many of these passages bear marks of being written by a churchman, and this would accord with the facts above stated. If one might hazard a conjecture, he was perhaps some priest returned from Pe-king (suppose at the breaking up of the establishment) who being employed to make a translation or copy, might be allowed to enrich it with his own observations, and even those of his friends.

Under these circumstances, it became a serious question, whether, in the text of this volume, the passages found only in Ramusio should be retained or expunged. The latter course appeared too strong for the editor to take upon his own judgment, yet unconfirmed by that of the public. The reader might be unwilling to have withheld from him descriptions which have so long formed part of the standard edition of these travels ; and besides, as there is reason to believe that they are in a great measure derived from authentic sources, they may still be held deserving of perusal. It has, however, appeared advisable to point them out in the notes ; and when the statements contained in them contradict those in the early editions, or are palpably erroneous, they are withdrawn from the text.

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* Maritime and Inland Discovery, vol. i. p. 311-313.
† Klaproth, in Journ. Asiat. vol. xii. p. 82.

Besides the three authorities now mentioned, the text has been carefully collated with the following important manuscripts and printed editions.

That formerly belonging to the Accademici della *Crusca;* which is now, it appears, in the Magliabecchi Library. That body always boasted of it as the most ancient and most complete,—pretensions which Zeno and Marsden are inclined to dispute,* though not on any precise grounds, and without having seen it. Count Baldelli Boni, however, who has favoured the learned world with a printed edition of it, gives reasons for considering the claim to be well founded, so far at least as Italian MSS. are concerned.† There is a note prefixed by a writer, stating it to have been copied by Michael Ormanni, his maternal great-grandfather, who died in 1309, only about twelve years after the narrative was written. This cannot perhaps be implicitly relied on; but the count considers the appearance and style of the MS. as quite confirming the statement, and leaving at all events no doubt of its being the earliest Italian manuscript now known. Its peculiar importance is derived from the confirmation it affords of the genuineness of the French edition, from which the count seems justly to describe it as a translation "abridged and purged of useless words and repetitions." This origin, proved clearly by mistakes arising from imperfect skill in that language, led him, even without the additional information of M. Parris, to the remarkable conclusion, that the narrative was originally written in French.‡

The *Pucci* MS. is considered by the count as next in

* Marsden, Introduction, pp. lxi, lxii.

† This important work is in four volumes 4to. Florence, 1827. The two first, entitled "Il Millione de Marco Polo," contain the Crusca MS. collated with several other early Italian ones; also a reprint of Ramusio's edition. The count has added a number of valuable notes and illustrations. The last two volumes, entitled "Storia delle Relazioni Vicendevole," &c., contain abridged narratives of other early travellers in Asia.

‡ Il Millione, Introduction, p. vi-cxxiii; tomo i. p. 131.

antiquity, and as written in the course of the fourteenth century. M. Zurla informed him that the Soranzo, so highly estimated by Mr Marsden, was later, and only an abridgment. The first very closely follows the Crusca, yet the writer must have had a French copy before him,* the use of which is proved by fresh errors in the meaning of its terms. We have thus additional proof of the French being then regarded as the original. Count Boni has given a valuable collation of this MS. with the Crusca.

A Latin translation was made by Pipino, a monk of the Order of Preachers, who undertook the task at the desire of his superior. After some years' labour it was completed in 1320, while the traveller was still alive; and it may therefore be considered the earliest of which the date is fully ascertained. But, though professing to be a translation, it is greatly abridged; and in the hands of the friar errors were committed which have run through other editions. What is left may be held as tolerably pure; and the editor has had the opportunity of consulting it in two shapes.

5115. Harleian MS., *British Museum.*—This codex, to which Sir Henry Ellis assigns the date of about 1400, is written with care and elegance. It wants some passages that are in the printed edition, but what remains is on the whole more to be depended upon.

Marci Pauli de Consuetudinibus et Condicionibus Orientalium Regionum, 4to.—This is the printed edition without place or date, which last is supposed to be about 1484. It is very rare, and is more complete than the MS. just mentioned; but, compared with it, there are several errors, especially in the numbers.

251. Sloane MS., *British Museum.*—This is an Italian manuscript, dated 1453. M. Zurla wrote to Count Boni, that he considered it on a level with the Soranzo, but I incline to believe it somewhat later. The prologue is

* Ibid. Introduction, p. vii-cxxv.

different, and wants the mention of Rusticians. It is modestly called an epitome, but it is really more copious than any other, except Ramusio and those recently edited. It contains, though in an abridged form, the historical chapters at the end, which the former wants; nay, it has the war between Toctai and Nogai, which is found in no other except the French. The abridgment, being made as usual by simple omission, leaves the remaining text pure. The handwriting is exceedingly indistinct; which, added to the antiquity of the language, renders the deciphering of it a very laborious task. Mr Marsden, though assisted by a gentleman versant in ancient characters, has made some serious mistakes.

A Latin edition was prepared with great care by Grynæus, who published it both separately and in his *Novus Orbis*. It does not vary extensively from Pipino, yet seems drawn from another source, and is translated in a much more elegant style. It is curious that the names are different and more barbarous. This edition became, for some time, the standard one; and reprints continued to be made even after Ramusio's appeared. There is an early impression bearing the name of Helmstadt, 4to, 1585, with some notes, but of little value.

This edition was republished by Andrew Müller, 4to, Berlin, 1671. He illustrated it by learned though ill-arranged notes, and by a collation with a manuscript in the electoral library, which, however, is only one of Pipino's version. The whole of this edition is rendered into French by Bergeron,—Voyages en Asie.

The most noble and famous Travels of Marcus Paulus, &c., translated into English, published at London, by Ralph Newberry, 1579, and containing a Dedication by John Frampton, the translator.—This, from Mr Marsden's observations, appears to be taken from the Seville edition of 1520, always considered very rare and valuable, and not we imagine without reason. It has the prologue and the name of Rusticians (called Ustacheo), pretty sure marks of genuineness. Though on the whole rather

full, there are some serious omissions. The book is said to be extremely scarce.

La Description géographique des Provinces et Villes les plus fameuses de l'Inde Orientale, &c. Par Marc Paule, gentilhomme Venetien, Paris, 4to, 1556.—This is the first French printed edition, and is stated to be translated from the Latin, which appears to be that of Grynæus in the Novus Orbis.

This list, derived from the publications of the Geographical Society and Count Baldelli Boni, includes the earliest manuscripts and editions known to exist in the French, the Italian, the Latin, and the English languages. The only others of any consequence accessible to Mr Marsden, were the first printed Italian, 1490, and German, 1477. They appear to be only bibliographical curiosities, and have not served him either in forming or illustrating his text. The first, according to his statement, is a mere popular abridgment. The editor has seen one, 12mo, Trevigi, 1267 (for 1627), which he imagines to be an exact reprint, for it agrees with Mr Marsden's account of the other, in beginning with the ridiculous story of a man at Trebisond who had tamed 30,000 partridges, and then taking up the Poli at the court of Kambalu. Of the German edition, Mr Marsden has given the prologue, which, containing no mention of Rusticians, must have been from a MS. of secondary value.

It will be observed that no pretension is here made to a *verbal* collation of these different editions ; a curious but herculean task, foreign to the object of this work. The editor, however, has endeavoured to bring into view the discrepancies on points of important information, and if possible to distinguish the truth. When it is mentioned that a passage is either found or wanting in the early editions, this of course can include only those now quoted, as the editor can say nothing of any which he has not had the opportunity of inspecting.

It will be proper here to mention a single particular, in which the usual arrangement of the work has been

departed from. After the brief narrative of the journey with which it opens, the remainder consists of a description of the various countries and cities visited by the traveller. They may therefore be introduced in any order which seems most convenient. As China is the most important of the regions described, and was then distinguished by peculiar splendour, it is not without propriety that it occupies the first place. It is followed by a description of Central Asia, and then of the countries on the Indian Ocean. The text has been given entire, including all the additional matter, and also passages which, though perhaps doubtful, have long been comprehended in the work. This edition therefore will, it is believed, be more complete than any hitherto given to the world.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

Embassies to the East prior to Marco Polo.

Great Plain of Scythia or Tartary—Its Inhabitants, Turks, Mongols—Former Conquests—Temugin or Gengis—His first Exploits—Ouang or Prester John—His Defeat and Death—Extensive Conquests of Gengis—Tartar Invasion of Europe—Ravages—Embassy and Letter from the Pope—Carpini's Journey through Poland—Reception by the Tartar Chief Corrensa—Journey to the Volga—Court of Baatu—Journey through Tartary—Arrival at the imperial Court—Great Splendour—Numerous Ambassadors—Treatment of the Mission—Letter from the Emperor to the Pope—Return to Europe—Embassy by Ascelin—Reaches the Army of Baiothnoy—Rash Conduct and rough Reception—Final Dismissal—Changes in the Mongol Dynasty—Embassy to the French King—He sends a Mission under Rubruquis—Landing at Soudak—Journey through the Crimea—Visit to a Tartar Chief, Scacatai—Description of Comania and Russia—Court of Sartach—Of Baatu—Journey through Tartary—Arrival at the imperial Court—Reception—Audience of the Great Khan—Various Superstitions—City of Karakorum—Religious Controversy—Dismissal of the Ambassador—His Journey homeward—The Tartars—Their Government—Manners—Physical Condition—Religion—Military System—Breaking up of the Dynasty of Gengis.

From the remote shores of Eastern Asia, westward as far as the Rhine, extends a vast plain, which, during the whole period of ancient history, presented an aspect of the deepest barbarism. The population had nowhere advanced beyond the pastoral state, whose occupations they combined with the more favourite ones of war and plunder. Such enterprises were greatly facilitated by

the moveable nature of their property, which rendered it easy to assemble in large bodies, and march to the remotest regions. They were tempted, moreover, by the view of rich and civilized kingdoms, extending in a continuous belt along the whole southern border of both continents. Hence, in the earliest times, arose a mighty and incessant impulse; so that, from the heart of the north, there issued, in successive swarms, not armies, but whole nations, with wives, children, herds, and flocks, cutting their way with the sword into fairer and more fruitful lands. The shepherds of Scythia seated themselves on the greatest thrones of the east.

The Roman empire, in the utmost height of her power, unable to make the slightest impression on this vast mass of barbarism, sought merely, by strong chains of fortresses on the Danube and the Rhine, to secure themselves against its irruption. It was not till the eighth century, that Charlemagne, by means of his arms and policy, stamped upon Germany some rude elements of civilisation, which were gradually developed. Thence a portion spread eastward, till it included Russia, which was not then, however, the vast sovereignty we now behold, but a large dukedom, extending on both sides of the Dnieper, and of which Kiev was the capital. The remainder of Europe in that direction, and the whole north of Asia, continued unchanged. To this region, marked by a wild and rude uniformity, the ancients had given the name of Scythia; yet, at the several points of contact with it they recognised distinct nations, as the Goths, the Alani, the Massagetes. During the early part of the middle ages, the conquests made by a people called Tartars spread their name so extensively, that it was studiously adopted, and has become general over all that portion of the world. Still the inquirer into oriental history discovers a variety of tribes, bearing distinct appellations, and exhibiting separate characters.

The most prominent division is into Turks and Mongols; for the Mantchoos lie somewhat beyond our range. The former are spread widely over the central

part of Asia, where vast naked plains are interspersed with well-watered spots, which are brought under tolerable cultivation. Bordering at some points on the great southern kingdoms, they have imbibed a portion of their fixed and civilized habits. Enjoying a plentiful subsistence, and leading a free and natural life, their bodily structure has been happily developed; they are plump, with fair complexions, a good deal resembling Europeans, and are celebrated for their beauty throughout the east. The Mongols have their domain to the north and east of the Turkish; it lies along the border of the Altai, and in the rude valleys formed by its branches. Their external form, which has made them be classed as a distinct race, exhibits a complete contrast to that of their neighbours. Their figure is short and broad, the face flat, with high cheek-bones, eyes small and curved, with a nose scarcely rising above the other features. Their country, though containing good pastures, is barely capable of culture, to which the people are almost strangers. Thus, compared with the Turks, they present this type of barbarous life in a purer and more complete state; they are fiercer, can assemble in larger numbers, and move with greater rapidity. Hence they have generally domineered over the surrounding nations; though, except China, they have rarely penetrated into any of the civilized kingdoms. They have merely impelled against them other tribes situated nearer their borders. From Europe they seemed placed at an almost immeasurable distance; yet history records two occasions when they spread wide desolation over that continent. The first occurred in the fifth century, when, under the name of Huns, they were led by Attila, surnamed the Scourge of God, and esteemed their supreme monarch. But though he compelled several of the Gothic nations to seek refuge in the Roman empire, he himself never formed any permanent settlement within the boundaries of the Danube and the Rhine.

Seven hundred years after, another name arose, which, in point of grandeur and terror surpassed even that of

Attila. The Yeka or Great Mongols inhabited an extensive region along the foot of the Altai, which appears to be rude and uncivilized beyond even the other territories claimed by that race.* About 1176, Jessagi Baydur, khan of this people, died, leaving the succession to his son Temugin, then only thirteen years of age; and hands so youthful being ill fitted for such a sway, a number of the clans assumed independence, or united under another chief.† Only about a third remained true to him; yet with these, even at his immature age, he took the field, but was unable to accomplish any decisive success. Continued efforts for nearly twenty years were necessary, before he could establish his dominion over his own hereditary lands. He then turned his arms against the neighbouring tribes, of whom he could complain that they had favoured his refractory subjects; and in less than ten years, he compelled, though with difficulty, these hardy shepherds to join his standard.‡ In the course of this long struggle, he had become inured to all the arts of policy and war; he had formed a veteran army devoted to his person; and had organized it more regularly than was usual among the troops of that wild country. He now found no rival except in Ouang, khan of the Keraite Mongols,§ who had long ranked as the most powerful prince in that part of Asia.

Ouang appears to be the monarch so celebrated in the middle ages under the appellation of Prester John; and in point of fact, the idea of a christian prince in that remote interior of Asia is not so chimerical as may at first sight be supposed. We shall find in the following narrative that the professors of the Nestorian sect were numerous there, especially at Karakorum, the capital of the sovereign just named. Having penetrated from Syria, and become the ruling sect among

* Recueil de Voyages et de Mémoires, publié par la Société de Géographie (4to, Paris, 1839), tome iv. p. 530.

† Genealogical History of the Tartars, by Abulghazi (London, 1730), p. 63-65.

‡ Ibid. p. 66-69. Recueil, &c. p. 537.

§ Recueil, p. 535.

the Eighurs, a Turkish tribe immediately south of his dominion, they thence made their way among the Mongols, to whom they taught the art of writing and some other primary elements of civilisation.* It appears by no means impossible that they might make a convert of Ouang. It is also, however, very probable, that he followed the course usually taken by all the Tartar princes towards powerful sects; inviting them to his court, showing kindness to their leaders, seeking from them favourable omens, even expressing in private attachment to their creed, and holding out hopes that he would embrace it. These attentions, exaggerated by those to whom they were paid, might easily create in Europe the idea of a great Asiatic ruler combining the character of king and of priest; for the latter office in that age was by no means considered a derogation from the former. We shall find similar rumours spread on the same grounds respecting the fiercest of the posterity of Gengis. Ouang, amid the versatility of oriental names, might readily be converted into John; indeed Abulfaraj, an eminent eastern writer, calls him King John. He is said to have extended his dominion very wide, and in a work of that age is called the Terror of Asia.†

Friendship had hitherto reigned between him and the Prince of the Yeka Mongols; but they were now too mighty to move in one sphere. The annals of the latter, which alone survive, accuse the other of jealousy, and of seeking to entrap him by base stratagems. Certain it is that war arose;—they fought;—Ouang was totally routed, and in his flight killed by two personal enemies,—an event which the conqueror is said to have generously regretted.‡ Temugin, now undoubtedly the most powerful ruler in Asia, opened his mind to more extended schemes of conquest; and an entertainment given to his chiefs, in celebration of the victory, was marked by a striking though preconcerted event. Cokza, an aged chief, whose daughter he had married, and who

* Recueil, pp. 521, 522. † Ibid. p. 550-553.
‡ Abulghazi, p. 70-78.

possessed a high fame for sanctity, presented himself, and delivered a letter said to have been received from the celestial regions. It was found to contain an injunction, that the prince should change his name to Gengis,* "the Most Great," and a promise, that he and his posterity would for ever hold the place of grand khan over all the Tartars. It added, that Heaven had bestowed on them an entire dominion over mankind; so that all nations were bound to pay them implicit obedience.† Gengis joyfully accepted the commission, which he was already prepared to execute.

He began now to turn the tide of conquest in every direction over Asia. We cannot here enter into the detail of his proceedings, which indeed are somewhat obscure; but it appears certain that, on the side of China, he humbled the dynasty of the Kin, and became possessed of nearly the whole country north of the Hoang-ho. In the battle of Kalka, he defeated Duke Mieizzlaw of Russia; but did not advance into Europe. He completely overran the north of Persia, and extorted homage from the Syrian and Armenian kingdoms. On the frontier of India, he became master of Cabul, and reached the western banks of the Indus, though he did not cross that river. He had thus vanquished the barbarous portion of Asia, without penetrating very deeply into its civilized regions. This task was left to his successors.

In 1226, Gengis died,‡ having designated as successor Okkoday,§ his third son, who had been much distin-

* Amid the perplexing variations of oriental orthography, the editor has determined generally to follow Mr Marsden, who has bestowed pains, and possessed the requisite qualities for deciding on this subject. As some guide to the reader through this labyrinth, he will give, as the narrative proceeds, the principal shapes assumed by the name of this and several other great chiefs. He is also called Zingis, Chingis, Tchingis, Tchenkis, Tchinkis.

† Abulghazi, pp. 78, 79. He does not mention the letter; but its existence will appear evident in the course of the narrative; and this was apparently the occasion on which it was forged.

‡ Ibid. p. 146.

§ Called also Oukodoy, Ugadai, Oktai.

guished by his warlike exploits. Five years afterwards, a general assembly of the chiefs was held at the imperial tent on the Orchon, when it was determined to send a grand expedition against Europe. The command was given to Baatu,* the offspring of Jugi,† eldest son to Gengis, and he had with him many princes of the blood-royal, particularly Kuyuk‡ and Mangou,§ also grandsons to the founder, and who afterwards rose in succession to the dignity of grand khan. A force was placed at their disposal, which has been estimated, probably with great exaggeration, at 600,000 men.|| Never, perhaps, was the earth swept with a mightier tempest of desolation. Marching across nearly the whole of the northern parts of Asia and of Europe, they encountered every where nations too warlike to yield, yet too weak to resist. These tribes were devoted to almost indiscriminate slaughter; and certain travellers, who soon after passed over this immense plain, saw only a desert strewed with the bones of the vanquished. Entering Europe, they overran Russia and Poland, after which they advanced into Silesia. The duke, with all the force he could muster, met them at Waldshut, near Liegnitz; but he was completely routed, and his whole army cut to pieces. They then poured down upon Hungary, and finding no troops to oppose them, wasted it throughout with fire and slaughter.¶

This dreadful inroad struck Europe with extreme terror, for there seemed nothing to prevent the whole continent from being overwhelmed by the arms of the barbarians. Chimerical fears were added; it being reported that the bodies of the vanquished after being slain were greedily devoured. A letter is found from Pope Innocent IV. expressing a dread of the entire destruction of the christian name. That pontiff endeavoured to induce all

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* Called also Batou, Bathyn, Baty.
† Called also Tchoutchy, Zuzi.
‡ Called also Gayuk, Cuyné, Chin.
§ Called also Mangu, Mongou, Mankou, Mengko.
|| Recueil, pp. 460, 461. ¶ Ibid. pp. 461, 462.

the European nations to rise in mass against the invaders; an object which might certainly be considered legitimate, though the prevailing divisions rendered the accomplishment difficult.*

While the panic was still at its height, this terrible foe suddenly disappeared. It was supposed that the intelligence of the King of Bohemia, the Dukes of Austria and Carinthia, having assembled forces, and being in full march, had alarmed them into this step. The real cause, however, was the death of Okkoday, which took place in 1241; when the leading chiefs in the army being candidates for the throne, hastened back into their own country to be present at that important election. They seem, however, to have felt the military character of Europe to be such, that their conquests there could not be covered by a mere detachment; hence, evacuating Hungary, Poland, and even Kiev, they retired behind the Dnieper. The want of any fixed rule in oriental succession made it difficult to settle so mighty an inheritance. The late emperor had designated to the throne his grandson Schyramoun; but, on account of his youth, had named as regent the Empress Taurakinah. This princess, however, was mother to Kuyuk, and determined to exert her influence among the tribes in favour of her own son. Baatu, who might have advanced strong pretensions, did not choose to excite any division, but remained sullenly on the banks of the Volga, neither opposing nor sanctioning the rival claims.† The lady, as we shall see, ultimately succeeded in raising Kuyuk to the supreme dignity.

Europe was for the present delivered; but as the Tartars had uttered loud threats of speedily returning with a greatly augmented force, the utmost alarm prevailed lest this menace should be executed. There accordingly seemed an urgent call for some measure which might mitigate their rage, or altogether avert the pressure of such a calamity. The power of the pope

* Hakluyt. Recueil, p. 463. † Recueil, p. 462.

being then at its utmost height, and forming the sole tie by which the different states of Europe were connected, was the only source whence such a proposal for the common defence could emanate. He was naturally disposed to employ churchmen, who alone perhaps possessed the requisite education. The mendicant orders, particularly the Franciscan and Dominican, enjoying then a paramount influence, were readily selected for a mission to the formidable potentate. Their religious character would have commanded respect; but the studied meanness of their exterior, added to an utter ignorance of mankind, ill fitted them to exert an influence over a proud prince, whose court was filled with ambassadors from all the countries in the East.

At that moment two Tartar armies maintained a menacing position. One was that which had first invaded Europe, and was still posted on its frontier; the other, stationed in the north of Persia, threatened at once the caliphate and the eastern empire. On determining to send envoys to each, the pope divided the duty between his two favourite orders. John de Plano Carpini, a Franciscan, advanced in age, and who had been employed in various confidential transactions, was named for the northern host. He was to be accompanied by Stephen of Bohemia, and Benedict of Poland; but the former was unable to complete the journey. The Persian mission was intrusted to Dominican friars, named Ascelin or Anselm, Alexander, Simon de St Quentin, and Albert.* Carpini, who proceeded first on his destination, was furnished by the pope with the following letter, which, indeed, is not inserted in his relation, but has been extracted by M. D'Avezac from the Minorite annals.†

"INNOCENT, BISHOP, SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD, TO THE KING AND PEOPLE OF THE TARTARS.

"SINCE not only men, but also irrational animals, and even the mechanical mundane elements, are united by

* Recueil, p. 464. † Ibid. p. 478.

some kind of alliance, after the example of superior spirits, whose hosts the Author of the universe has established in a perpetual and peaceful order, we are compelled to wonder, not without reason, how you, as we have heard, having entered many lands of Christians and others, have wasted them with horrible desolation, and still, with continued fury, not ceasing to extend further your destroying hands, dissolving every natural tie, neither sparing sex nor age, direct indifferently against all the fury of the sword. We therefore, after the example of the Prince of Peace, desiring to unite all mankind in unity and the fear of God, warn, beseech, and exhort you, henceforth to desist wholly from such outrages, and especially from the persecution of Christians; and since, by so many and so great offences, you have doubtless grievously provoked the wrath of the Divine majesty, that you make satisfaction to him by suitable penitence; and that you do not be so daring as to carry your rage further, because the omnipotent God has hitherto permitted the nations to be laid prostrate before your face. He sometimes thus passes by the proud men of the age; but if they do not humble themselves, he will not fail to inflict the severest temporal punishment on their guilt. And now, behold, we send our beloved brother John, and his companions, bearers of these presents, men conspicuous for religion and honesty, and endued with a knowledge of sacred Scripture, whom we hope you will kindly receive and honourably treat as if they were ourselves, placing confidence in what they may say from us, and specially treat with them on what relates to peace, and fully intimate what has moved you to this extermination of other nations, and what you further intend, providing them in going and returning with a safe conductor, and other things needful for returning to our presence. We have chosen to send to you the said friars, on account of their exemplary conduct, and knowledge of the sacred Scriptures, and because they would be more useful to you as imitating

the humility of our Saviour; and if we had thought they would be more grateful and useful to you, we would have sent other prelates or powerful men."

Carpini* and his companions, being destined to take the route of Poland and Russia, departed from Lyons on the 16th April 1245, and proceeded first to Bohemia. The king showed a deep interest in their success; gave them recommendations to all the christian sovereigns through whose territory they were to pass; supplied a safe conduct; and defrayed their expenses to the court of his nephew Boleslaus, duke of Silesia. That prince forwarded them with similar attentions to Conrad, duke of Lantiscia (Masovia), where they had the good fortune to find Wasilico, duke of Russia. He earnestly favoured their design, and gave them much information respecting the people whom they were about to visit, and the mode in which they must be dealt with. Presents, he warned them, were indispensable, and for that purpose he supplied beaver and other valuable furs, to which more were added by Conrad and the Duchess of Cracow. Carpini took the opportunity of urging Wasilico to renounce his Greek heresy, and return to the unity of the church; but this was courteously evaded by saying, that such a step could not be decided in the absence of his brother Daniel. Conveyance was afforded to Kiev, then the capital of Russia, to which the enemy's outposts had closely approached. Great dread was inspired into the minds of the travellers by the character of the Lithuanians, a barbarous race, who made frequent incursions

* The narrative of Carpini, with a previous descriptive account of the Tartars, was published by Hakluyt, vol. i. p. 53, &c. The Paris Geographical Society have edited it anew (Recueil de Voyages, &c.) from an ancient MS. in the Leyden Library, collated with others in the Royal Library at Paris, and the British Museum. The variations are curious; but do not materially affect the tenor of the recital. M. D'Avezac has prefixed a very learned dissertation, with illustrative documents, from which I have derived important advantages.

into the territory; however, the party were dragged in their wagon through ice and snow without sustaining any loss. At Kiev, the Russian nobles told them it was vain at such a season to use their own horses in a country where there was neither hay nor grass; and native ponies were substituted, which could find food even under the snow.

On the 4th February 1246, the friars set forth, and a few days after arrived at Canow, the first post of that warlike and terrible race to whom they were sent. Their appearance caused the utmost surprise; and an armed party rushed upon them in a threatening manner, demanding what sort of persons they were. They replied, that they were the messengers of their lord the pope; upon which the intruders departed. Next morning, some of the leading officers inquired whence they came, and on what business? They then delivered the message of his holiness, expressing his desire that the Tartars should be the friends of Christians, and attain their own salvation by embracing the true faith; adding his surprise at their committing such dreadful massacres, and especially upon believers, who had never injured them. He warned them that as they had grievously offended God, they ought to beware of such deeds in future, and repent of what they had already done. Finally, they were requested to write to the pontiff, stating what their present intentions were. This was not very cautious language; however, being probably ill understood, and delivered in a quiet manner, it kindled no apparent resentment. They were told they must go forward to the station of the great leader Corrensa, who held command along the whole frontier. Oriental princes are fond of receiving embassies, which they consider not only as a matter of state, but always represent as the instruments whereby homage and tribute are laid at their feet.

On reaching this court they were assigned a remote station, and messengers came to ask, "with what they would incline to him;" meaning, it seems, what presents

they intended to give. They made many apologies on account of the length and difficulty of the journey, but tendered what they could, which was accepted. Being led to the general's tent, they were required to kneel three times before the entrance; and upon being admitted, they presented in the same humble attitude the letter of his holiness to the barbarian chief, whom they found seated in the midst of his officers. An interpreter, whom they brought from Kiev, could not convey the import of the epistle; however, the usual course was taken of sending them forward to Baatu, the commander in the late invasion of Europe.

In this journey the friars passed over the vast plain of Southern Russia, then called Comania,* watered by the great rivers Dnieper, Don, Volga, and Yaik or Ural. On the third of these mighty streams were ranged the troops of Corrensa. They were obliged to perform the march with harassing rapidity, changing horses three or four times a-day, and posting from morning to night. Having arrived, they were lodged as before at a distance, and obliged to go through the same ceremonies, with the addition of passing between two fires. To this they at first strongly objected; but, being informed that it was considered quite necessary to secure against evil design or poison, they at length yielded. They delivered the letter kneeling to the khan, who was seated in great pomp on a lofty throne beside one of his wives. The members of his family and the more distinguished chiefs sat on a bench beneath him, all others on the ground, the men on the right and the women on the left. Only his own kindred could enter without an express order. He is described as kind to his followers; skilful, and experienced, but dreadfully cruel in the prosecution of war.

The friars were furnished at this court with inter-

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* The Comanians appear to have been once a very numerous tribe of Tartars, called in the East Kapchak, and by the Slavonic nations Polowski, but no trace of them seems now to remain. Recueil, p. 487.

preters, who, aided by themselves, made a translation of the pope's letter. Baatu is said to have read it attentively, but without any observation. On coming out, however, it was announced, according to the usual system, that they must proceed onward to be presented to Cuyné (Kuyuk) Khan, the great emperor of all the Tartars, whose residence lay far to the eastward. This was a most painful arrangement, rendered more so by the intimation, that only two were to go on, and the two others to be detained, and sent back with a message to the pope. They durst not, however, object, but went with many tears, " not knowing whether it was to life or to death." They were very unfit for so hard a journey, having for many days received no food but millet, and no drink except snow melted over the fire. Yet they were obliged to ride at the same furious speed, changing horses, where they could be got, several times a-day. Their route lay still through Comania, described as a very great and long country, whose inhabitants had been recently vanquished and nearly exterminated by the Tartars; and the dismal spectacle was every where presented of their skulls and bones lying neglected on the ground. A similar scene was exhibited during their progress through the territory of the Kangittae* and the Bisermini.† They then travelled several days along the banks of a small inland sea, apparently the Balkash. It was described to them as subject in winter to most violent gusts of wind, issuing, as was imagined, from a small aperture in a mountain situated on the shore. Here they found a Tartar court occupied by Ordu, a prince of great age, with one of his wives. They halted a day and obtained some refreshment, but were not admitted into his presence. Their advance was continued with greatly increased hardship, leading into a

* A Tartar horde, called properly Kanklis, a name said to be still retained among some of the Nogay tribes. Recueil, p. 500.

† This is the Russian name for Mussulman, and has been applied here to Turkestan, whose inhabitants had actually embraced that faith, and through whose territory the mission now proceeded. Recueil, pp. 501, 502.

rugged and mountainous region, where much snow fell, and they were called upon to increase even their rapid rate of travelling, in order to be present at the approaching election of the emperor.

At length their weary journey terminated, and they arrived at the great imperial court; where a tent was allotted to them, and their expenses handsomely defrayed. The papal letter, as interpreted at the court of Baatu, was delivered, and read by Cuyné; but they were not called into his presence, because he was not yet elected, and did not therefore exercise any functions of sovereignty. A few days after, however, they were invited to the tent of his mother, where all the imperial state was at that time exhibited. It was formed of the finest white cloth, and of such vast dimensions, that in their opinion it could have contained 2000 persons. There were two gates, one of which, appropriated to the monarch, stood continually open and unguarded, yet no one but he dared to enter by it; the other was the gate of audience, but admission was granted only by the prince's express order. In front was a barrier, which, if any one passed without license, he was severely beaten, and, if he attempted to flee, was shot. On the outside were ranged princes and ambassadors from all the courts of Asia,—the caliph, the Turkish dynasties, Georgia, India, China, also Duke Ieroslaus of Russia. The whole number was stated to Carpini to exceed 4000. The scene, which was dazzling, exhibited in profuse display all the pomp of the eastern world. The ambassadors were mounted on spirited horses superbly caparisoned, richly ornamented with trappings of pure gold. Each day they appeared in a different dress; in white, in scarlet, in blue, lastly, in very rich Baldakin (Bagdad) robes, considered then the finest of any. Koumiss, or fermented mare's milk, which was most copiously supplied, was drunk till the evening in immense quantities. The friars, on intimating a strong dislike to it, were supplied with ale, but were with difficulty allowed to keep within the bounds of moderation.

Meantime, the chiefs, admitted into the great tent, were deliberating on the choice of an emperor. From the augmented pomp with which Cuyné appeared, the opinion became daily stronger that the election would fall upon him; and, after a month, though not publicly announced, it became generally understood that this decision had been formed. The whole multitude of princes and ambassadors then thronged to a spot three or four leagues distant, beautifully situated on a river between mountains, where the golden tent had been pitched. It much exceeded the other in splendour, being supported on pillars richly gilded, and covered in a great measure with the finest Bagdad cloth. The grand ceremony was delayed a few days by a tempest of hail; but at length, on the 24th August, the whole multitude assembled, and, turning their faces to the south, performed various genuflexions. They then turned to the tent, and a gilded chair being brought out, upon which Cuyné was seated, the Tartar chiefs said "we wish, we pray and command, that you have power and dominion over us all." Cuyné replied, "if you wish that I be your king, are you resolved and disposed each of you to do all that I shall command, to come when I call, to go whither I send, and to kill all whom I shall order to be killed?" The chiefs replied, "yes." "Then," said he, "henceforth my word alone shall be my sword." Immediately after, he was seated on a chair of felt, and addressed as follows:—"Look on high, and see God; and look down on the felt whereon thou sittest. If thou dost govern well, thou shalt reign in power and magnificence, and the whole earth shall be subject to thee; but if ill, thou shalt be poor, miserable, vile, and contemptible, and shalt not have power even over the felt whereon thou sittest." His principal wife was then placed in the same seat, and both were lifted up into the air, and proclaimed with loud shouts Emperor and Empress of all the Tartars. The ceremony was closed with profound genuflexions by the chiefs of the whole people, though the friars boast that they formed an ex-

ception, "because they were not subject to him." Considering, however, that they had, without hesitation, performed this homage to inferior chiefs, the withholding it from the supreme ruler on so high an occasion seems neither reasonable nor prudent.*

This emperor is described as being about forty or forty-five years of age, of middle stature, extremely considerate, serious, and grave in his demeanour. It was even asserted that he had scarcely on any occasion been seen to laugh; and from the moment of his elevation, no stranger, however illustrious, was allowed to speak to him. The communication was entirely through the officials; nevertheless, during the whole time that the petitioner stated his request and received the answer, he remained on his bended knees. His majesty had resigned none of the pretensions of his family to universal dominion. On his seal was engraved, "God in heaven, and Cuyné Khan upon earth, the power of God: the seal of the emperor of all men."

A few days after the ceremony, the friars, with all the other ambassadors, were admitted to an audience. Presents on such occasions are always expected in the East; and at so solemn a time they were displayed with almost unrivalled magnificence. They appeared to be very numerous; robes of satin, purple, silk interwoven with gold, and precious furs. A small tent (umbrella), to be placed over the emperor's head, was entirely studded with gems; and at a little distance were ranged more than five hundred wagons laden with gold, silver, and the richest silks. After this exhibition, the friars were asked what they intended to present; but, having exhausted their slender stock of skins, they were obliged to declare that

* Bergeron (Voyages en Asie, Haye, 1735, p. 14) has given some of these details from the Speculum Historiale of Vincent, who states that he had obtained it verbally from Simon de St Quentin. That friar indeed was with the Persian, not the Tartarian mission; but he is understood to have possessed extensive knowledge respecting the East. See Recueil, pp. 404, 405.

they had nothing whatever; nor is it said that any resentment was expressed.

They seem even as yet to have had the impression that they were regarded with favour and treated with respect. Nay, hopes were held out by some of the household, though seemingly without any foundation, that the great monarch might embrace the christian faith. They were now politely desired to return and spend a few days at the court of the queen-dowager. But what was their dismay to learn that, during their absence, the khan had "set up his standard against the church of God, and the Roman empire, and all the kingdoms and nations of the West, unless, according to injunctions in the letter to the Lord the Pope, they should become subject to him." From this disastrous intelligence, the traveller endeavours to justify a feeling of pride, arguing that there being no other land on earth which they feared except the christian, they had determined to make war against it. The pretension to universal dominion had always been maintained by this race; yet we may suspect that the lofty tone of the pope's despatches, and the imprudence of his envoys, were instrumental in prompting to this hostile assertion of it.

The friars then returned to court, and remained there a month, during which time victuals were most scantily supplied; the provision allowed for four days scarcely sufficing for one. They were then sent for by the emperor, who asked, through his prothonotary, whether the pope had any one about him that could explain the Russian, the Tartar, or Saracenic language. It was answered that none of them were understood in Europe. An arrangement was therefore made, that the letter should be written in Tartar, and carefully explained to them, after which they were to translate it into Latin, read it twice over, and see that it was fully comprehended. They are chargeable with the great omission of not giving the slightest hint of its contents; but this has just been supplied by M. D'Avezac from a MS. in the royal library at Paris. It is as follows:—

"LETTER OF THE KING OF THE TARTARS TO THE LORD POPE.

"The strength of God, Kuyuk Khan, the ruler of all men, to the great Pope. You and all the christian people who dwell in the West have sent by your messengers sure and certain letters for the purpose of making peace with us. This we have heard from them, and it is contained in your letter. Therefore, if you desire to have peace with us, you pope, emperors, all kings, all men powerful in cities, by no means delay to come to us for the purpose of concluding peace, and you will hear our answer and our will. The series of your letters contained that we ought to be baptized and to become Christians; we briefly reply, that we do not understand why we ought to do so. As to what is mentioned in your letters, that you wonder at the slaughter of men, and chiefly of Christians, especially Hungarians, Poles, and Moravians, we shortly answer, that this too we do not understand. Nevertheless, lest we should seem to pass it over in silence, we think proper to reply as follows. It is because they have not obeyed the precept of God and of Gengis Khan, and, holding bad counsel, have slain our messengers;* wherefore God has ordered them to be destroyed, and delivered them into our hands. But if God had not done it, what could man have done to man? But you, inhabitants of the West, believe that you only are Christians, and despise others; but how do you know on whom he may choose to bestow his favour. We adore God, and, in his strength, will overwhelm the whole earth from the east to the west. But if we men were not strengthened by God, what could we do?"

It was intimated to the friars that the emperor was disposed to send ambassadors along with them, but wished the proposal to come from themselves; and a Tartar chief strongly urged them to make it. They considered how-

* Allusion is here made to Tartar ambassadors, whom the Russians murdered before the battle of Kalka.

ever that, as these envoys were without doubt intended to act merely as spies, their hostile designs would be encouraged by the view of the dissensions prevailing in Europe; and that in the present state of public feeling in the West, they would probably be killed, a violence which, in the case of a royal representative, the Tartars were understood never to forgive. They declined therefore making any overture; and the emperor did not choose to send an embassy unasked.

On the 13th November, having obtained permission to depart, and the imperial seal as a passport, they took their leave. They travelled all winter through a wide open country, being commonly obliged to sleep on the ground, after clearing away the snow, with which, in the morning, they often found themselves covered. They passed rapidly through the stations of the different chiefs, and on the 8th June, to their inexpressible satisfaction, arrived at Kiev. The people came to meet them with joyful congratulations, as men risen from the dead; and they received the same cordial welcome throughout the whole of Russia, Poland, and Bohemia. Carpini afterwards spent three months at Lyons with the pope, by whom he was soon after created Archbishop of Antivari, in Dalmatia.*

It was not till 1247 that Ascelin,† with the three Dominican friars, travelled through Syria to the Tartar host, then encamped in Persia. They appear to have been much inferior, both in prudence and intelligence, to the former party. Drawn from the depth of conventual life, strangers to the world and the mode of dealing with mankind, they imagined that the pope's mandate, when announced, would command obedience among the most savage tribes. Accordingly, they approached the

* Recueil, p. 598.

† Simon de St Quentin, one of the number, wrote a very copious relation, from which only a few extracts were inserted by Vincent in his Speculum Historiale, and they have been copied by Bergeron (Voyages en Asie). M. D'Avezac made a search, but without success, for a MS. of the original (Recueil, &c. p. 405).

army in the most confident manner, and apparently without any apprehension. Being met by several chiefs demanding who they were and whence they came, they described themselves as the ambassadors of the pope, the head of the christian world, throughout which he was every where regarded as a father. The Tartars then said, in an ironical tone, "since your pope is so great a man, he doubtless knows that the khan is the son of God, by whom he has been invested with the dominion of earth, and that by his instructions Baatu in the north, and Baiothnoy* here, receive the same honours." Ascelin had so little judgment as to reply, that the sovereign pontiff knew nothing of any such persons, but only that there was a barbarous people called Tartars, who invaded and destroyed many nations, particularly the christian; he earnestly exhorted them to repent of their past wickedness, and cease to annoy the people of God. Whatever the chiefs might think of this speech, they simply conveyed it to the commander: but, after changing their clothes, they came forth with the usual inquiry as to what presents he had brought. It was answered, that the pope received gifts from all men, but never gave them to any, far less to strangers and infidels. The Tartars, still without any remark, went back to their chief, and returning in fresh clothes, expressed astonishment how foreigners dared to approach their great master without offering a present. They added, however, that the friars might still have an audience of Baiothnoy, provided, according to his strict regulation, they would perform three genuflexions before him. Having consulted together, they decided, that it would be a shame and scandal to perform such an act of idolatry to a pagan. Yet they intimated, that if the khan and his people would become Christians, the ambassadors, for the honour of the church, would perform this homage.

* Noy or Noyan appears to express a commander-in-chief, but not of the blood imperial, and therefore not entitled to the rank of khan. The proper name of this chief is said to be Batchou (Recueil, p. 464).

Upon hearing this proposal, the chiefs, who hitherto had studiously preserved outward decorum, burst into the most furious rage. They declared that they would be sorry indeed to become christian dogs like their visiters; adding, to their utter horror, that the pope was a dog. The others attempted to reply; but, luckily perhaps for themselves, their voice was drowned in shouts and clamour; and a council was called, to determine the manner in which they should be treated.

The only consideration at first was concerning the mode in which they should be put to death. Some recommended that they should be flayed alive, and their skins, stuffed with hay, sent to Rome. Others proposed, that in the first battle with the Christians, they should be placed in front, and made to fall by the weapons of their own countrymen. In this crisis, however, female humanity interposed, and saved them from so dreadful a destiny. The principal wife of Baiothnoy ran to him, and without hoping to move his pity, represented the disgrace that would be certainly incurred by thus violating the law of nations, as well as the sure effect of deterring many other embassies which now came with grateful homage and presents. She urged also the likelihood of his incurring the displeasure of the khan, which had been strongly expressed on a former occasion of similar barbarity. Several chiefs embraced the same views, and it was finally determined not to proceed to extremity. The friars were even, according to the usual custom, invited to proceed into the interior of Tartary, and appear at the court of the great sovereign. They considered themselves, however, as having seen quite enough of Tartar courts, and declared that having fulfilled their appointed mission, nothing but force should induce them to proceed farther; and this the commanders did not choose to employ.

Their only object now was to quit this dreadful spot, and return to Europe. Baiothnoy having suffered the letters to be presented to him, and ordered them to be interpreted, they hoped that their deliverance was not

far distant. On soliciting, however, passports and guides, it was intimated, that since they had come so far to see a Tartar army, they should wait till a large reinforcement arrived, which would exhibit its qualities on a much grander scale. They solemnly protested against having the slightest wish to see any thing more of their troops; but it soon appeared, that, besides overawing them by this spectacle, the design was to keep them some time as objects of insult and derision. They were nearly starved on minute rations of black bread and sour milk, while invention was daily tasked to find new modes of annoying them. Particular delight was taken in taunting them respecting the pope, and requiring them to say how many armies that prince maintained; what battles he had gained; and what kingdoms he had conquered. When it transpired that he had neither soldiers nor dominions, it was triumphantly asked how such a personage could be compared to their great khan, who had subdued nations innumerable, and was obeyed in the remotest extremities of the East and the West. The treatment they received was, on the whole, exceedingly barbarous; which the commander, on being appealed to, excused on the ground of their rude speeches,—a charge which they treat as altogether unfounded, though the reader may, perhaps, form a different judgment. Even after they seemed on the point of escape, they were detained some weeks longer till a certain messenger named Auguta should arrive from the great ruler. The object seems to have been, that they might witness, without sharing, the drinking, dancing, and howling, with which, during a whole week, his visit was celebrated.

At length the friars obtained their long-desired dismissal, and had two letters put into their hands. The first, impiously termed a "Letter of God," had been sent by the khan to Baiothnoy, with the view of its being circulated over the whole world, and among all nations. It intimated, that while the deity was high over all and immortal, he had appointed Gengis the only lord of

earth ; and it gave warning of the dreadful consequences that would overtake all who should disobey this universal empire. The latter chief had been dead twenty years ; but his commission was considered as descending to his posterity. It was probably a copy of the same forgery, which we have seen presented to that great conqueror on a high festive occasion. The other, from Baiothnoy himself to his holiness, contained the following expressions :—" Know, pope, that your messengers have come to us, and have delivered your letter, and have held the strangest speeches that ever were heard. We know not if you authorized them ; but we announce the firm command and ordinance of God, that if you desire to remain seated in your land and inheritance, you, pope, come to us in your proper person, and do homage to him who justly rules the whole earth. If you do not obey, God only knows what may happen." However unsatisfactory these despatches might be, the friars thought themselves too happy in being allowed to depart with them.

The threat announced during Carpini's residence, in a manner so solemn and terrible, of again invading the western kingdoms, was not immediately carried into execution. Kuyuk died a year after, not without suspicion of poison ; and as only grandsons of the great conqueror survived, their claims, according to the loose ideas of succession in the East, were nearly balanced. The uncertainty continued several years, though without leading to any serious conflict. Baatu, as the offspring of Jugi, the eldest son, stood nearest, and the European invasion threw lustre over his name ; yet Taulai and his family, by their conquests in China, as well as by their actual possession of the seat of Mongol power, had acquired a peculiar consideration. The difficulty was removed by the former waving his claims, and declaring in favour of his cousin Mangou, the son of Taulai. He invited the principal chiefs to come to his court along with that prince, who, in 1251, was there chosen great khan, or general emperor of all the Tartars.

That people, meantime, continued to maintain a powerful army on the eastern frontier of Persia. After subduing all the Arab kingdoms in Central Asia, their object was to subvert the imperial throne of Bagdad, the mightiest sovereignty of the West. The mission of Ascelin and his companions, however ungraciously received, had probably excited their curiosity, which was always alive to every thing that could lead to the extension of their dominion. They might then easily learn the gallant achievements of the Europeans in Syria, and the zeal against the Mohammedan name by which these had been inspired. When St Louis, king of France, was at Nicosia in Cyprus, he received a letter from the chief then commanding this army, whose name is given as Erkaltay. The contents are somewhat variously reported, being even said to intimate, that he himself, as well as the great khan and all his chiefs, having embraced the gospel, were engaged in war for its propagation. More probable accounts represent him as merely professing goodwill towards Christians, and zeal to aid their views against the Moslem states. An intention was expressed of next year laying siege to Bagdad, when his majesty was solicited at least to keep employed the arms of the Soldan of Egypt. That zealous monarch was delighted with the proposal, and immediately sent an embassy, of which, however, no record appears to have been preserved.* At the same time, a report was received, that Sartach, the son of Baatu, now commanding on the western frontier of Tartary, had become a Christian. To him also the king then determined to send a mission, of which a full and interesting narrative has come down to our time.†

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* Astley's Voyages, vol. iv. p. 552.

† Hakluyt inserted in his Collection the original Latin, but only in part. Purchas having procured a complete copy, made an English translation, which he introduced at the beginning of his third part. The Geographical Society of Paris have just published a full edition of the original, from a manuscript

It was conducted by William de Rubruquis, a Minorite friar, with three brethren and a servant. He went by way of Constantinople, whence he sailed on the 7th May 1253, and on the 21st arrived at Soldaia, now Soudak, in the Crimea. To this place, which was the theatre of a very active trade, caravans from remote parts of the continent brought not only ermine and other precious furs from Siberia, but also cotton and silk fabrics and spices from India. He met a very friendly reception from the merchants, who enjoyed the free profession of Christianity, having a bishop and cathedral church. He immediately began his inquiries about Sartach, particularly whether, according to the report prevailing in the Holy Land, he were really a believer. The bishop, without seemingly committing himself to this extent, told him many good things respecting the said Sartach, which afterwards proved to be wholly unfounded.

On the 1st June, our traveller set out with a provision of wines, fruits, and biscuits, having received intimation that no one was welcomed there who came with an empty hand. He placed these commodities, together with vestments and books, on wagons drawn by oxen, which he had been advised at Constantinople to prefer to pack-horses; but by following this "evil counsel," he found the length of his journey doubled. The country was a wide plain covered with numerous traces of the calamities which had overwhelmed the Comanians. Fleeing in crowds into this narrow peninsula, where there were no adequate supplies of food, they had, after enduring the utmost extremities of famine, been driven to the direful resource of devouring each other. In three days he met the Tartars, among whom he thought himself quite in a new world. They rode up in their usual unceremonious manner, and on seeing him provided with wine and biscuit, solicited a portion. Being presented with

in the British Museum, collated with others at Cambridge and Leyden. The variations are curious, but not of great magnitude.

one flagon, they pressed for another, arguing that a man could not enter a house on one foot; but the friars would extend their bounty no farther. The next question was, whence they came, and whither they were going. They stated their desire to visit Sartach, and, in the first instance, Scacatai, who, they had learned, commanded the outposts on the frontier. After considerable delay, horses and guides were promised; but, in the mean time, intense curiosity was manifested respecting the contents of the carts, and the nature of the presents designed for the monarch, whether they were gold, silver, or precious cloths; but care was taken to afford no information on such subjects. During a tedious delay, however, they continued, he says, incessantly "begging our bread for their young brats, wondering at all things which they saw, and desiring to have them." He admits that they took nothing by force, but were most shameless and importunate beggars. As their demands were steadily resisted, the intercourse became so discourteous, that on leaving them, he felt as if "escaped out of the hands of devils."

Next day, he met the carts of Scacatai "laden with houses, and methought that a mighty city came to meet me." These moving abodes, composed of a frame of wicker, covered with white or black felt, and thirty feet in diameter, are placed on huge wagons, drawn each by twenty-two oxen. About three o'clock they "unladed their houses," when there appeared huge droves of cattle and sheep, but very few men; indeed the friars learned that the general had not under him above five hundred soldiers. An interpreter who waited on them was presented with some victuals, but he expressed much discontent at not receiving also a rich garment. When they showed him the biscuit, wine, and apples, destined for the chief, he declared these wholly inadequate, without the addition of valuable robes. It appeared, in fact, that cloth, with which they had come wholly unprovided, was the only article here esteemed. Even money was neither known nor cared for, so that when

presented with a gold coin they simply wished to know whether it were copper. However, it was necessary to admit them into the presence of Scacatai, whom they approached with a good deal of timidity. He sat on a couch, having beside him his wife, whose nose formed a considerable subject of wonder to the friars, not yet accustomed to the peculiarity of Mongol features. They verily thought she had cut and pared it till she had left herself no nose at all. She had besmeared it and the eyebrows with a black powder, rendering herself, in their apprehension, a most ugly creature. However, the chief received them very graciously, accepting their wine and fruits with the plea of poverty for not giving more.

The worthy monks afterwards made great efforts to convert some of them to the true faith, but soon found an irresistible obstacle in the opinion which the Russians had instilled, that no true Christian could taste a drop of koumiss, their favourite liquor, and without which, they asserted, that it was impossible to subsist in the desert. Rubruquis sought to persuade them that pure religion did not prohibit the temperate use of a wholesome beverage; but the idea had taken such deep root, that nothing could remove it, and all his efforts proved abortive.

On Whitsunday he received letters and guides for Sartach; but in proceeding, he encountered so many annoyances, that he felt as if "he passed through one of hell's gates." His attendants proved bold thieves; but, taught wisdom by repeated losses, he kept very strict watch over them. He soon came to the narrow isthmus which connects the Crimea with the continent. Here were a ditch dug from sea to sea, and a customhouse for levying duties, principally on salt. On leaving the peninsula, he entered the vast plain of Comania, or Kapchak. On one side was the gulf of Azof, on the other an immense level surface, extending in some places upwards of twenty days' journey, and covered with the richest pasture, yet in the greater part of it not an inhabitant

had been left. On this dreary route nothing appeared but water, sky, and the sepulchres of the Comanians.

Russia is described as a vast country stretching towards the north, but which had been, and still was, dreadfully wasted by the Tartars. He endeavoured to employ his interpreter as a vehicle for conveying to the other attendants some knowledge of the christian faith. The linguist, though objecting much to being made a preacher, put on an appearance of complying; but the acquisition of a slight smattering of the language enabled the friar to perceive that, instead of conveying pious instructions, he was talking on the most indifferent subjects. The attempt was therefore renounced. After some days the travellers arrived at the Tanais (Don), which is noticed as the boundary of Russia, and compared to the Seine for magnitude. Here they remained three days, being well regaled on turbot and other delicate fish. The country beyond was finely wooded and watered, abounding in furs, honey, and wax. From a difficulty in procuring horses, Rubruquis was obliged to walk a good part of the way; but, in a few days, came in view of the Etilia or Volga, which struck him as the mightiest river he had ever seen. He was correctly informed as to its course into the Caspian, a lake or sea four months' journey in circuit. On the 2d of August, three days after leaving it, he arrived at the camp of Sartach.

Here Tartar life was for the first time presented on a great scale; for this chief had six wives, and his eldest son three; while each female owned a large house and two hundred carts. It was necessary to appear before Cojat, a Nestorian in high authority; but the guide was not a little dismayed at finding no present, either for himself or that great personage. To the chief, who was seated in state, with music and dancing before him, the friar introduced himself as a man who had renounced gold, silver, and every precious article, and possessed only the vestments proper to his office; having therefore nothing of his own, he could not give to

others. This explanation was received graciously; and after some questions respecting European princes, he was allowed to depart. But next morning an order came from the minister to bring all his books and vestments; and, the stranger not daring to object, they were spread forth in the presence of numerous chiefs assembled on horseback. Struck with their beauty, Cojat asked if he would bestow all those things upon Sartach. Grief and trembling seized Rubruquis at this suggestion; but with all the composure in his power, he stated that these were holy things, which it was unlawful for any except priests to wear. He was then desired to invest himself in them, and appear before the great lord. He took a rich cushion, a bible presented to him by the king, and a psalter, containing beautiful pictures, received from the queen. A curtain of felt being then raised, exhibited the chief seated in the midst of all his wives, and with great store of koumiss and drinking-cups on a bench before him. The monks entered singing *Salve Regina*, when the clerk and interpreter, but not the friar, were required to bend the knee. The Mongol leaders, at the same time, were rushing in and rudely jostling them. Sartach examined the bible, and the cross with the image on it, putting some questions respecting both; but our traveller was dismayed to hear nothing that favoured the report, upon which this painful journey had been undertaken, of his being a believer in the gospel. He never even seemed to refer to the subject, except in a tone of scoffing and derision. On inquiry, the sole ground of the rumour was found to be, that when christian merchants, many of whom passed this way, brought liberal presents, they were graciously accepted; but when Mohammedans offered larger gifts, they met a welcome still more cordial.

To this severe disappointment was soon added another grievous affliction. Next morning after the interview, the Nestorian sent for him, and, according to the usual system, announced that he must proceed onward to the court of Baatu. The mandate was so peremptory,

that he did not attempt to object, but was dismayed at being desired to leave behind his books and vestments. He argued strongly against this demand, and thought he had succeeded ; but next day a priest and a brother of Cojat laid forcible hands upon them. On its being represented that they were necessary for a decent appearance before Baatu, the answer was, that the same articles could with no propriety be exhibited before both princes. Rubruquis opened his mouth to make as he thought a triumphant reply, but was desired to be silent and depart. He contrived, however, to secrete the bible, but durst not venture on the psalter, which, from its golden pictures, had attracted peculiar attention.

In proceeding eastward, the friar was kept in great fear, being assured that a number of runaway captives, forming themselves into bands, often during the night attacked travellers, whom they murdered and robbed. He was extremely struck by the majestic appearance of the Volga, and wondered from what regions of the earth such huge and mighty waters should descend. Being informed of the great sea into which it fell, he had sufficient knowledge of geography to recognise it as the Caspian, and by his route detected the error, then prevailing it seems in Europe, of considering the latter a gulf of the Northern Ocean.

On reaching the station of Baatu, he was astonished at the scene which presented itself. The tent-like houses covered a vast space of ground, which had the appearance of a mighty city. Yet, like those of the children of Israel, they were arranged in regular order, and each man, when he unloaded his house from the cart, knew where to place it. The centre one, according to which all were placed, was the great orda or tent of Baatu. On their arrival a Saracen received them, though without supplying victuals ; and next day he led them to the prince, warning them not to speak till ordered, and then briefly. Vast crowds flocked to see the friars, who, standing in the habit of their order, bareheaded and

barefooted, were it is said "a great and strange spectacle in their eyes." So accommodating was the khan, that he caused a large tent to be pitched, that the people might indulge their curiosity. The party being introduced, found him on a high gilded seat, beside one of his wives, with the others on one side, while the rest of the space was filled by the chiefs. On a bench before him was koumiss in stately cups of silver and gold set with precious stones. Rubruquis being then called upon to kneel, bent upon one knee; but finding this unsatisfactory, did not choose to contend, and dropped upon both. Misled by this position, instead of answering questions, he began a prayer for the conversion of the khan, with warning of the dreadful consequences of unbelief. The prince merely smiled; but the derision which was loudly expressed by the surrounding chiefs, threw him into a good deal of confusion. He then delivered the king's letters, unwilling, it should seem, to describe himself as a royal messenger, but rather as sent by Sartach, and having come under the impression that both he and Baatu were Christians; a remark of which no notice was taken. The chief then began to inquire respecting the King of France, and the war which he was waging against the Saracens. He asked the friar to sit and take a draught of koumiss, and seeing his eyes cast down, desired him to look up.

The reception was thus considered satisfactory; but no sooner had they gone out, than the usual dread announcement was made, that they must proceed onward through Tartary, and appear before Mangou, the supreme khan. They were struck with consternation, the interpreter declaring he esteemed himself a dead man. Rubruquis was also much discomposed by being told that he could take with him only this personage, whose conduct had much displeased him; but by earnest entreaty he was allowed the associate, while the clerk was obliged to return.

Being warned that he must travel four months through regions of extreme cold, he was made to leave

most of his common clothes, and invest himself in garments of ram-skin, with the wool inside. He departed on the 16th September, and proceeded through the country of Cangle (Kankli Tartars), having on the right the Caspian, and on the left the region named Bulgaria the Greater. They were hurried rapidly forward, being obliged, he says, to travel every day as far as from Paris to Orleans; a space which his troubles have evidently led him to overrate. As the Mongols chose always the best horses for themselves, and our friar was corpulent and unwieldy, he found it a most laborious task to keep pace with them. His allowance in the morning was only a little millet and water, but in the evening mutton and a dish of broth, which marvellously refreshed him. On the whole, however, he complains that "of hunger and thirst, cold and weariness, there was no end." In twelve days he reached the great river Yakok (Yaik or Ural) coming from the country of Pascatir (the Bashkir Tartars). At this stage, ceasing to behold either city or town, they entered "a huge and vast desert, which was in dimensions like unto the ocean sea." The guide at first treated them with great contempt, and considered his lot hard in being obliged to accompany "such base fellows;" however he gradually conceived a more favourable opinion of their characters, and introduced them to the residence of Mongol chiefs, by whom they were courteously entertained. Offers were even made to them of gold, silver, and fine cloths, and much surprise was expressed when these gifts were rejected. Inquiries were renewed as to the western countries, the number of cattle and sheep in them, and particularly whether the great pope was, as had been reported, 500 years old. After a long progress they turned southward, and found ranges of mountains interspersed with fertile valleys and large rivers. On the banks of one was a city named Coilac, represented as the seat of a great trade, but which, with other places mentioned, our imperfect knowledge of the region renders it difficult to identify. Here the traveller met votaries of the Shaman or Buddhist

religion, so widely diffused through Eastern Asia. He saw their idols of large dimensions placed behind a chest or table covered with candles and rich oblations: a report was even made of one in Cathay, which could be seen at the distance of two days' journey. Yet, on being strictly interrogated, they professed belief in the unity and spirituality of the Deity, and represented themselves as venerating such images as representations only of deceased friends. Their priests reside in convents, containing one or two hundred inmates. On meeting in the temples, they remain in long rows, when, though profoundly silent, they are understood to be mentally repeating certain mysterious words. Our friar made frequent but vain efforts to provoke them to speech. The Mongols adopt their system, not generally, but to the extent of framing in felt likenesses of dead relations, and placing them in a separate tent, into which none but themselves are permitted to enter. Rubruquis made the attempt, but got himself heartily scolded in consequence. They have also diviners, who precede their marches, and fix the spot where the tents are to be pitched.

On leaving Coilac and the lake, they proceeded northward through a mountainous region covered with deep snow. No human abodes appeared, except the post-stations maintained by the sovereign, and even these at no very convenient distances. Violent gusts of wind, which are said to be sometimes so strong as to blow travellers into the rivers or lakes, rushed through the valleys. They came to a pass of the most frightful aspect, which superstition had peopled with demons, who were believed occasionally to dart forth and carry off unfortunate strangers. Rubruquis was requested to guard against these dangers by some good words; and he complied so far as to read the creed, when the whole party passed without the slightest molestation from Satan or his emissaries. This raised his reputation so high, that he was importuned from all quarters for bits of writing; and hence he conceived that, with an expert interpreter, he might have made a number of converts. At length they came

to the plain where Ken (Cuyné or Kuyuk) Khan had been visited by Carpini. Mangou, however, had chosen a different residence, which they could reach only by going northward, over another range of high country. In their progress they came to a plain like the sea, where there was not even a molehill; and another day brought them to the palace of that great lord.

They experienced no very cordial welcome; for while the guide had a spacious house assigned to him, the three Europeans were thrust into a little cottage, with scarcely room to lay their clothes. Being, as usual, interrogated as to his purpose, Rubruquis replied, that he had visited Sartach on the supposition of his being a Christian, and had been sent forward by him and by Baatu. They next demanded whether he came to make peace? He replied that his master, the French king, having never done them wrong, he knew not why they should make war upon him. It soon transpired, however, that by peace they really meant submission; and they continued repeating, in a tone of lofty wonderment, "why came you, seeing you came not to make peace?" He seems to have been hereby transported beyond the bounds of christian feeling, intimating a disposition to preach war against them to the ends of the earth.

Next day, the friar having appeared in public barefooted according to the costume of his order, drew round him a crowd of men, who gazed on him as a monster, asking if he wished to lose his feet. In fact, during the day, his toes became frozen, and it was necessary to cover this part of his person. Seeing a house with a cross upon it, he entered and found a well-ordered altar with images, and an Armenian, somewhat lean, and clad in rough haircloth, who received him cordially. This person had come from the territory of Jerusalem, in the hope of converting Mangou Khan, and earnestly exhorted Rubruquis to strenuous exertions for that purpose. He even advised him, in case of compliance, to tender the submission of the French king; an expedient which the other refused to adopt. Towards evening,

they obtained a small meal; but the guide and his companions, having got drunk, never thought of them; indeed they seemed not to attract attention in any quarter.

A few days after, however, they were brought to the court, and being examined by some Nestorian priests as to the degree of homage they were willing to pay the great khan, they gave satisfactory answers, and were led to the gate of his house. When they had sung a hymn, and been carefully searched for concealed weapons, the felt curtain was raised, showing the interior of the tent covered all over with cloth of gold. The khan, seated on a bed or rather sofa, appeared about forty-five, of the middle size, with a flat nose, and wrapt in rich and brilliant fur. Beside him sat his wife, a pretty little young woman; also, Cirina, a grown-up daughter, with hard features, understood to be mistress of the household. Four different liquors were offered, but he left the choice to themselves, and was presented with one made from rice, of which, moved by respect, he drank a little. It happened that Mangou had in the apartment some falcons and other birds, which he made to light on his hand, and whose movements interested him so much more than the message of the friars, that for a long time he took no notice of them whatever. At length, they were desired to speak, being at the same time ordered to drop upon their knees. Rubruquis gave the same account as before of the circumstances which had led him to visit the imperial court, concluding with a request to remain in the country, and teach his religion. He added an apology for not having brought gold, silver, or other precious articles. The khan replied in lofty terms:—"Even as the sun spreads his beams every where, so our power and Baatu's spreads itself every where, so that we have no need of your silver and gold." Here, however, a serious obstacle arose to farther intercourse. The interpreter had taken such advantage of the abundant supply of liquor, that he could no longer distinctly convey the sentiments intrusted to him. The extreme awkwardness of this situation was alleviated by

the appearance of strong symptoms that Mangou had also indulged too freely; and under these circumstances, the earliest opportunity was embraced of taking their leave. They were followed by the secretary, who proceeded to examine them respecting the kingdom of France, especially the number of rams, oxen, and horses contained in it. These inquiries, to our traveller's deep indignation, were found to be made on the understanding that the Tartars were presently to proceed thither and take possession of the whole. It was also announced that Mangou charitably allowed him to remain two months, when the extreme cold would be mitigated. He solicited permission to reside permanently, but received no answer.

He had now the satisfaction of meeting a lady from Mentz, whose husband was employed as an architect, and began to find himself generally viewed with a more favourable eye. Having complained, that in his present mansion he had not even room to pray for the khan, he was provided with an abode somewhat more spacious. The supply of victuals even would have been tolerable, were it not that whenever the party sat down to their meals, half-starved natives rushed in for a share. The monk indeed asserted that the khan was at least partial to Christians; but this soon appeared to be a complete deception. He merely maintained a friendly intercourse with all the sects, and obtained from each prayers and favourable predictions; while they readily followed his court, "as flies do honey." He bestowed on them gifts, and they prophesied to him prosperity. This mortifying impartiality became very evident on a great holiday, when the Nestorian priests went in first and performed their ceremonies; but they were followed by the Saracens, and these by the idolaters. The friar, having one day entered a Nestorian chapel, was much surprised to find Mangou seated. He was made to sing a psalm, and to show his bible, breviary, and images, which the prince carefully examined. The latter then departed, but his lady remained, and having filled a large cup with liquor, desired a blessing on it, fell on her knees, and drank it

off. Similar observances continued, till her majesty, being completely drunk, was carried home in her chariot. Rubruquis generally remarks, that the persons here calling themselves Christians did the utmost dishonour to their holy profession. Courting the grandees by the most abject flattery, they allowed their magical and idolatrous rites to pass without censure, and instead of reproving their intoxication, shared it in the most scandalous manner. He was much dissatisfied even with his Armenian friend, whom he accompanied to a great lady called Cota, then extremely unwell, and on whom all the arts of magic and divination had been vainly exhausted. The priest presented what he termed holy water, but it proved to be an infusion of rhubarb, the effects of which were represented as supernatural, and being probably adapted to the full habit of body which her mode of living had produced, afforded speedy relief. . Our friar was at first struck with awe at the sight of this object, which he conceived as bearing a sacred and mysterious character; but on learning that it was a mere cathartic root, expressed much displeasure at such deception. He observed too, that though, in drinking, the lady did homage to the cross, there were four swords half-drawn disposed at each side and both ends of the bed; while a silver chalice, suspected to have been carried off from a church in Hungary, was filled with ashes and a black stone, evidently for purposes of conjuration; yet to these profane objects no exception was taken by the monk.

Towards the end of Lent, the khan removed to his royal seat of Karakorum, when the friars, with other official attendants, were expected to accompany him. The route lay northward, among hills covered with deep snow; and the cold becoming most intense, their prayers were solicited in order that the animals composing the train might not perish. After two days it abated, and on Palm Sunday, at nine in the morning, they entered the city, bearing the cross aloft, and met a Nestorian procession, which they accompanied to church. This capital of an empire which embraced nearly half the

world, is described as unfit to bear any comparison with the town of St Denis, near Paris. There were two principal streets, one occupied by the Saracens, adjacent to the court where the fairs were held, and merchants chiefly resorted; the other by the Chinese, where trades and manufactures were practised. The palace, situated near the gate, occupied an extensive space, enclosed by a brick wall like a monastery. The great hall for festivals is compared to a church, having two rows of pillars, and three gates on the south; while on the north side was the raised seat for the monarch. William Bouchier, husband to the lady from Mentz, had constructed here a most admired ornament. It was a silver tree, having at its foot four lions, while through the trunk ascended an equal number of pipes, conveying respectively wine, koumiss, mead, and rice liquor. From the top, these conduits branched downwards, and became connected with serpents, which twined round the body of the tree. On the summit stood an angel, who, on a signal given by the butler, blew a trumpet, at which sound the servants, from copious stores provided in a concealed apartment, filled the pipes with their appropriate beverages. These, after making the circuit of the trunk and branches, descended into vessels prepared beneath for their reception. The khan held two great annual festivals, one at Easter, and the other at Midsummer, which last, as the more important, was attended by all the chiefs within twenty days' journey. On these occasions he had a very elevated place, where he "sat above like a god." One lady was seated by him; while other places, considerably beneath, but still higher than those for the rest of the company, were occupied by the members of his family. All the men were on one side, the women on the other; while in the midst, between the throne and the silver tree, was an empty space for servants or ambassadors.

The authorities at Karakorum were found in considerable agitation, in consequence of a report that 400 assassins, disguised in various habits, were on the watch

to kill the emperor. The friars underwent a strict examination by the magistracy, and afterwards at court by several of the chief secretaries. To the latter the ultimate statement of Rubruquis was, that he came to speak to the khan words of God. They then demanded what words these were, expecting, he believes, that according to the usual practice, they would consist in announcing some prosperous event. On the contrary, he gave an honest and faithful exposition of christian duty. The examiners being mostly Saracens, were much displeased, and took a most unfair advantage of him, by demanding, whether his remarks did not imply that Mangou Khan did not keep the commandments of God. This cruel thrust he attempted to parry by saying that he was ready to expound his views to the monarch, leaving him to determine that point for himself. The other party, however, choosing, not without some reason, to consider him as thus admitting their allegation, proceeded directly to inform his majesty that he was denounced by this stranger not only as an idolater, but a violator of the divine statutes. Mangou appears to have been a good deal discomposed; yet he did not take any violent step. He merely sent his secretaries to the friars, observing that the Christians, Saracens, and Tuines (idolaters), had separate laws and books, and each insisted that his own was the best. He desired, therefore, that they should meet, explain, and compare their respective tenets, so that he might judge which was purest. Yet his displeasure was shown by the arrival next day of the messengers to announce, that having now resided long in the country, they must take their departure. They had indeed much exceeded the two months allowed in the beginning of January, having nearly reached Whitsun-eve; yet they had hoped to be silently permitted to remain. The same wish was intimated, as in the case of Carpini, that ambassadors should accompany them to France; but Rubruquis declared his inability to guarantee their safety in the warlike countries through which he was to pass.

The preparations for the conference continued, and seem to have excited a considerable ferment, since the khan thought it necessary to proclaim, "that none speak contentious or injurious words to other, nor make any tumult, on pain of death." The idolaters murmured somewhat loudly at this unprecedented attempt to dive into their secrets; but they were not allowed to escape. By the final arrangement, the friar was pitched against them, seconded by the Nestorians, and even the Saracens, who concurred in his undertaking to prove the existence of one supreme deity, while the opposite party maintained the false doctrine:—"fools say there is one God, but wise men say there are many." From his report, he appears really to have maintained the argument in a very respectable manner, and boasts that his opponents, though without manifesting any signs of conviction, were reduced to silence. The two other parties celebrated this issue with a song of triumph, and then, according to their usual custom, by copious libations.

Next day, Rubruquis was again called to court, but warned to say nothing relative to his departure, as that was a point irrevocably decided. On coming into the presence, he was sharply asked, whether he had really termed the monarch an idolater. He denied it, and having repeated what he really said, was told it was well, as the alleged speech would have been highly improper. Mangou then began a sort of confession of faith, intimating, that he believed and served one God, who, he supposed, might reveal himself in different modes to different nations. He taunted the friar, by remarking that the Christians, who had received the Scriptures, did not observe them; but afterwards said, he meant no personal application. He even offered gold, silver, and fine cloths; but the holy man said, he wanted only aid for his journey, with a pass that would carry him to the King of Armenia. He was told that he should have both. Having then obtained leave to speak, he somewhat earnestly solicited permission to return; but after some musing, the answer was given:—"You have a long way

to go; make yourself strong with food." In this not uncourteous refusal he was obliged to acquiesce.

Rubruquis, though he declined receiving a political envoy, had readily agreed to take a letter, the composition of which occupied a considerable time. The court, indeed, was entirely engrossed by the arrival of ambassadors from Bagdad, from India, and from Turkey, and by a festival, at which much drinking took place. At length the epistle was delivered, the terms of which are somewhat intricate; but the general tenor was to announce, as usual, the empire of the world conferred by heaven upon Gengis and his posterity, the obligation of the King of France, as of all other monarchs, to obey it, and the serious consequences that would result if he failed to comply. It was the 9th of July before the mission were ready to depart, when, notwithstanding their resolution against receiving presents, they found it necessary, out of respect to the monarch, to accept each a single garment. This disinterestedness was extolled by the Nestorians to the idolaters; but they replied, it was because the travellers were fools, while they themselves, like wise men, if the khan should offer all he possessed, would gladly accept it.

Rubruquis, in his return, was enabled by the milder season to take a more direct course, by which, in two months and ten days, he reached the court of Baatu. The tract of country, however, through which he passed, was most desolate; and on one occasion only did he see the appearance of a house. Sartach was met on his way to pay homage to Mangou; he treated the pilgrims courteously, and gave an order on Cojat's father to deliver up all the articles that had been detained. Having determined to proceed by land, on account of the approach of winter, the travellers were furnished by Baatu with a guide to conduct them to the Soldan of Turkey. In passing through the Caucasian territory, they found the mountain-regions occupied by independent tribes, who made frequent inroads into the plain, so that even with a good escort they did not feel altogether secure. Proceeding

through Derbend, or the Iron Gate, they came to the junction of the Kur and Araxes; then ascended the course of the latter river, having Mount Ararat on their right. On reaching Erzeroum, they found themselves within the Turkish dominion, and proceeded direct to Iconium, its capital, for that empire then scarcely extended beyond Asia Minor. It was found much weakened by war with the Tartars and other vicissitudes; so that it was said, "a child ruleth in Turkey, having no treasure, few warriors, and many enemies." That power, however, was destined soon afterwards to break forth with increased energy, and become the terror of Europe. Rubruquis embarked at Aias for Cyprus, and thence proceeded to Antioch and Tripoli, where he rejoined his chapter.

These two expeditions conveyed to Europe a pretty distinct view of the economy of that mighty empire, which held sway over nearly one-half of the world, and struck terror into the rest. The spectacle is the more interesting, too, as it is now passed for ever. A people sunk in the depth of barbarism, ruling or overawing the entire circle of civilized nations, is a phenomenon which the lapse of ages can never reproduce. Intelligence, wealth, machinery, now give to the latter an undisputed superiority over brute courage; and ten British regiments would have speedily subverted the empires of Gengis and of Timur in their greatest glory. The aspect, therefore, which the first and greatest of these presented, must be very deserving of attention.

One of the circumstances which most struck the friars was the complete and absolute subjection in which the khans held a people, who might least have been expected to submit to such rule. They had seen in Europe, not indeed any regular despotism, yet the high domination of lords over their serfs, and of the heads of the church over the inferior orders; but no subordination, civil or ecclesiastical, could be compared with that which they here witnessed. The monarch appointed to each chief his place of residence, ordered him wherever he pleased, to war, to life, or to death, and was obeyed

without the slightest hesitation. No man, in relation to him, could call any possession his own, but held every thing at the command of the ruler. His messengers were furnished with horses, and whatever they wanted, in the countries through which they passed. If he desired to add to his wives the daughter or sister of any of his subjects, she was yielded up without hesitation; nay, a selection of the most beautiful maidens was periodically made, of whom he retained part for himself, and distributed the others among his officers. To account for a sway so despotic, we may remark, that all Tartary was then one vast camp, engaged in habitual war; and to carry on military operations with success, complete discipline and subordination were necessary. Gengis had also succeeded in overawing an ignorant people, by a pretended commission, and even, it was said, a forged letter from the deity, placing in his hands the dominion of the whole world. His splendid victories and extensive conquests, might seem to confirm this donation; and even their pride might lead them to submit to an authority which had raised their nation to such a height of greatness.

Another circumstance, equally opposite to preconceived ideas, was the polish, courtesy, and respectful familiarity, which distinguished their social intercourse. Quarrels, blows, combats, and bloodshed, then so frequent in Europe, were not witnessed, even amid their deepest potations. Honesty was every where conspicuous; their wagons and other property were secure without locks or guards; and if any of their cattle strayed, arrangements were made, by which they were speedily recovered. Notwithstanding the frequent scarcity of victuals, they were generous in relieving those in greater want than themselves. But towards all other nations they displayed the most inordinate pride. Great kings from different parts of Asia occasionally visited the khan; yet the meanest Tartars, appointed to attend on those princes, treated them as their inferiors, took precedence of them in walking, and occupied the principal seats in

the apartments. Their reckless massacres in war, too, were generally known. It is even asserted, that to promote their views of conquest, there was no deceit or stratagem to which they would not stoop; nay, that they had gained more by these arts than by their valour in the field. It must, however, be observed, that the law of nations, in regard to ambassadors, appears to have been very well observed, even where their conduct did not give satisfaction. While within the territory, they were guarded, and their wants supplied; and if in this last respect they often suffered much misery, it seems to have been rather the fault of subordinate functionaries, than the intention of the rulers.

In the domestic condition of this people we observe remarkable contrasts. Within their rude tents glittered all the pomp of the East; gems, gold, the richest fabrics of Bagdad, India, and China. These were brought profusely in name of presents, but in reality, under the influence of fear, as tribute. Yet this splendour was accompanied with a scanty supply even of the humblest necessaries of life. The subsistence of the great body of the people depended almost entirely on the milk of their cattle, during the season when it could be procured. That of mares was preferred to all others, especially after being fermented into their favourite liquor. In its absence, that of cows, sheep, and goats, was gladly consumed. In winter, when animals no longer yielded this beverage, recourse was had to millet, not made into bread, but dissolved in a large proportion of melted snow, and drunk as if it had been milk. Those who could afford to kill a sheep from time to time had in the evening a small dish of mutton made into broth. Even this scanty diet often failed, and these hardy warriors were obliged to spend whole days without food,—a privation which they bore patiently and even gaily. Yet this fortitude in submitting to necessity can scarcely be called temperance, since at their feasts, and on every occasion when koumiss could be procured, they indulged in the wildest excesses of intoxication. It may have

been observed, that even at the imperial banquets, the entertainment did not go beyond a sufficiency of mutton; the real luxury consisting in an immoderate consumption of intoxicating fluids.—The general conduct of the sexes was correct; their discourse was free from immodesty; and the breach of the marriage-vow was severely punished. But the extreme length to which polygamy was carried among the chiefs was at once immoral, and unjust towards the body of the people.

The religious condition of this singular society may be sufficiently collected from the narrative already given. The family of Gengis and all the great leaders professed a species of deism, which might even have been considered pure, had it not been solely employed as an engine of state policy. Its main tenet was the commission given from on high to hold the whole earth in subjection, and the consequent right to carry war and desolation among every people who should refuse to obey the mandate. In other respects a complete toleration was extended to the different creeds which prevailed in the country; including that of the Nestorian Christians, of the Mohammedans, who, as long as the caliphate survived, were called Saracens; and lastly, of the votaries of the Shaman superstition, nearly identical with that of Boodh or Fo,—a system widely diffused through eastern Asia. The priests of all these sects were not only favoured but courted, admitted to the palace, and loaded with gifts; while to each separately was held out the hope of his tenets being adopted by the monarch. No such intention, it may be presumed, was ever entertained; yet, besides the policy of conciliating the respective votaries, there does not seem to have been wanting a certain vague belief in them all, to the extent at least of expecting benefit from their prayers, and the fulfilment of auspicious predictions. The imperial creed too, amid its boasted purity, included, for purposes of divination and the cure of diseases, the meanest and most childish practices.

Carpini has given an account of the military system of the Tartars,—a subject which then excited in

Europe the most intense interest. It seems to have included systematic arrangements, then unknown in Europe, where the troops, rushing to battle under their feudal lords, displayed little more than a gallant onset. Here they were arranged in bodies of 10, 100, 1000, 10,000, commanded by officers rising always higher in station; while a few, of still more elevated rank, exercised the general direction of the war. They did not mingle with the combatants, but remained in the rear, issuing orders. If any members of a corps fled while the others maintained their ground, or stood aloof while the rest advanced, they were killed on the spot. Notwithstanding their daring valour, they resorted to every species of stratagem. They sometimes placed their captives on horseback in the rear, or formed even clothes into the shape of men, in order to magnify their apparent numbers. Before an engagement, detachments were placed in ambush, which, during the conflict, appeared suddenly on the enemy's flanks, spreading confusion and dismay. When they were to cross a broad river, they spread over it large hides, fastened by the corners with ropes, placing themselves and their baggage upon them. Horses were then attached in front, the foremost line of which was guided by men swimming. On capturing a city, inquiry was made for the best artificers, who, with a few others to serve as slaves, were carried along with them: all the rest were massacred without mercy. Noble or distinguished persons were never spared, or if by any chance they were, it was only to be kept in perpetual captivity.

The panic which still reigned in Europe of a second Tartar invasion proved happily unfounded; the khans being diverted in the first instance by more tempting objects. Hulagu, a nephew of Mangou, in 1258, subverted the caliphate, and Kublai, in the course of the next twelve years, made the complete conquest of China. The most violent dissensions then broke out among the members of this powerful dynasty, and the vast mass was soon broken into separate and hostile

fragments. Kublai was the last who was owned as Grand Khan of all the Tartars ; and even his real power did not extend far beyond the limits of China. There we shall find him, in the narrative of Marco Polo, combining the rude magnificence of the desert with the pomp and somewhat of the elegance of the most civilized empire then in the world.

TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO.

Preliminary Notice.

At the time when the events now related took place, ties of a more salutary nature connected Europe with the Eastern world. The Italian towns had become conspicuous as the scenes where arts and commerce, after being nearly crushed by the inroad of the barbarous nations, first began to revive. Their manufacturing industry, indeed, though very considerable, was surpassed by that of the Low Countries; still they formed almost the sole channel by which intercourse was maintained with Asia, whence at that time were imported all articles of luxury,—precious stones, pearls, spices, and cloths of unrivalled fineness. Venice, Genoa, and Pisa contended with each other in this career; but the first, owing to her situation and superior power, held the principal place. Her position was much advanced by a very extraordinary event, which occurred in the beginning of the thirteenth century. A crusade had been organized in France among a number of the nobles, who, proceeding to Venice, procured the necessary shipping by inducing Dandolo, the doge, a gallant chief, with other distinguished persons, to share in the enterprise. On reaching the shores of the Levant, their views took a very singular direction; for instead of advancing to the Holy Land, they turned their arms against Constantinople, carried that capital by storm, and placed Baldwin, count of Flanders, on the imperial throne of the East. The Venetians shared, not only the booty, but

also the power acquired by this wicked achievement. They were allowed to occupy an extensive quarter of the city, and to maintain there a podesta or bailo, invested with very ample jurisdiction.

There had never been wanting native merchants, ready to bring the desired commodities from the remoter provinces of Asia to the contiguous parts of Europe. But the Venetian traders, encouraged by their increasing prosperity, and the advantageous position now attained, began to aim at penetrating into the interior, and obtaining the goods on better terms in the country where they were produced. The dominions of the caliph, the head of the Mohammedan faith, opposed, it is true, a powerful obstacle to their taking the most direct route. But the successors of Gengis, though so terrible and merciless in the field, welcomed in their tented cities, without the least distinction of country or religion, all who brought articles that were either ornamental or useful. We have seen from Rubruquis, how Christian merchants, on paving their way with presents, passed unmolested through the camps of Sartach and Baatu. There were soon found distinguished citizens of Venice ready to follow in the same track.

Nicolo and Maffio Polo, two individuals who united the character, then common, of nobles and traffickers, in the middle of the thirteenth century, set out for Constantinople, whence they proceeded to the shores of the Crimea. There they were encouraged to visit a great Tartar chief on the Volga, where a series of events, for which we shall refer to the following narrative, led them on eastwards as far as China. After a short stay, they returned to Venice; and two years later, went back, according to engagement, carrying with them Marco, son to Nicolo, a promising youth. They spent twenty-four years in the East, chiefly at the court of the great khan, the Tartar monarch who ruled over China. At the end of that time they finally returned; but, on reaching Venice, were so completely altered,—their dress, appearance, and even language had become

so foreign,—that their nearest friends were unable to recognise them. After obtaining with difficulty access to their paternal mansion, they determined by a public display to satisfy their countrymen as to the happy results of their journey. All their relations and acquaintances were invited to a magnificent feast. They then presented themselves in splendid dresses, first of crimson satin, next of damask, and lastly of velvet bearing the same colour, which they successively threw off and distributed among the company. Returning in their ordinary attire, Marco produced the rags in which they had been disguised, ripped them open, and exhibited such a profusion of diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and precious jewels, as completely dazzled the spectators. Mr Marsden questions this anecdote, as unsuitable to the dignity of their characters; yet there is no reason to suppose in them any indifference to display; and Ramusio assures us, that about 200 years after, when he was a boy, he had been told it by Malipiero, an aged and respectable senator, who had heard the story from his own grandfather. It appears certain, that on the news of their wealth and adventures, persons of all ranks, ages, and professions, flocked to the house with congratulations and inquiries. Marco, whose society was courted by all the distinguished youths, stood forth as principal orator. Having often occasion in his enumerations of people and treasure, to repeat the term million, then not very common in Europe, the surname of Millione was applied to him, first in jest, but Ramusio says he has seen him thus named in the records of the republic; and the house in which he lived, down to that day, bore the title of the *Corte del Millione.* Count Boni has even adopted this as the title of his learned work on the subject.

Meantime, he appears not to have thought of committing his observations to writing; and the fruits of his travels would probably never have reached posterity, but for a severe misfortune by which he was overtaken. Venice and Genoa, those two mighty rivals, were then

at open war; and news arrived that a fleet belonging to the latter had appeared on the coast of Dalmatia. Andrea Dandolo was immediately sent against them, when Marco, with characteristic spirit, offered his services, and was appointed to the command of a galley. The squadrons encountered near the island of Curzola; and it was a disastrous day for Venice. Her fleet was completely defeated; and Dandolo himself, who was made prisoner, escaped only by a voluntary death the ignominy of being carried in triumph to Genoa. Marco, also, was wounded and taken; but, too wise to imitate the rash example of his commander, he was conveyed to that city, and lodged in prison. Here, according to Ramusio, his character and adventures excited an extraordinary interest; and being visited by the principal inhabitants, his captivity was rendered as mild as possible. A more important circumstance was, that he had a fellow-prisoner, Rusticians, a citizen of Pisa, though of French origin, who was imbued with an enthusiastic love of legendary and romantic lore. One of such a temper could not but listen with rapture to the wondrous tale of his companion; and it was soon agreed between them, that it would be most unjust to the world to withhold from it the knowledge of so many marvellous scenes as those which he had witnessed. Marco, we suspect, was no great penman;* but his companion was fond of composition, though without having attained very high proficiency. We quite agree with Count Boni, from the tenor of the narrative, that the traveller wrote no part of it, but merely dictated; nay, we doubt much if there was any such regular or author-like process as this term would imply. We should rather say that he talked it to his companion, who wrote it down as he best could. The frequent change from the first to the third person seems to prove, that while some parts were

* According to Ramusio, he sent to Venice for his notes, which are indeed repeatedly referred to in that editor's text; but, as not the slightest mention is made of them in any of the earlier editions, we greatly doubt if they ever existed.

thus committed to paper, others were written from memory after the conversation. Thus, by a curious combination of circumstances, was produced, in a foreign language and an irregular form, this extraordinary history. It was still a sealed book to the traveller's countrymen; but there seems every reason to believe that it soon received an Italian dress, under which it was rapidly circulated.

On the 12th May 1299, peace was concluded between the two rival cities; and Marco in consequence regained his liberty.* On his arrival, he found a considerable change in the family. His father, dreading, it is said, that through the son's captivity there should be no heirs to his great wealth, had taken a young wife; not being, perhaps, unwilling to excuse, on this ground, a step which might seem unsuitable to his age. Hence Marco found on his return three young brothers who had been born during his absence. He had too much discretion to take umbrage at this circumstance, or the consequent diminution of riches, which, indeed, were still sufficiently ample for all parties. Following soon after the example of his parent, he became the father of two daughters, named Moretta and Fantina. The rest of his life was spent in Venice; but modern inquirers have in vain sought to trace in it a single incident. It has only been discovered, that his will was made in 1323, proving him to have at least exceeded the age of sixty-six.

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* Boni, Il Millione, i. introd. xix. Mr Marsden supposes him liberated by the kindness of the Genoese; but the count seems to have had more precise information.

TRAVELS OF MARCO POLO.

Introductory Narrative of the Journey.

Prologue—Journey of Nicolo and Maffio Polo into the East—Their Arrival at the Court of Kublai, the Tartar Emperor of China—Sent back on a Mission to the Pope—Return, carrying Marco with them—Final Departure, and Voyage through the Indian Ocean to Persia—Arrival at Venice.

Prologue.

EMPERORS, kings, dukes, marquises, counts, knights, and all persons wishing to know the various generations of men in the world, also the kingdoms, provinces, and all the regions of the East, read this book: in it you will find very great and wonderful things of the nations, chiefly of Armenia, Persia, and Tartary, India, and various other provinces. In the present work Messer Marco Polo, a prudent and learned citizen of Venice, relates in order the various things which he himself saw, or heard from men of honour and truth. And those who read this book may be assured that all things in it are true. For I would have you to know that, from the creation of Adam to the present day, no Pagan, or Saracen, or Christian, or any other person of whatever race or generation, explored so many parts of the world, or saw such great wonders, as this Messer Marco Polo. He being in the year of our Lord 1295 shut up as a captive in the prisons of Genoa, thought with himself what a great evil it would be, if the wonders seen and heard by him should not be known to those who could not view them with their own eyes. He therefore caused the accounts here contained to be written by

Messer S. Rusticians of Pisa, who was confined with him in the same prison, in the year of our Lord 1298.

I.—Nicolo and Maffio Polo travel into the East.

In the year of our Lord 1250, the Emperor Baldwin reigning at Constantinople, Nicolo Polo, father of the said Marco, and Maffio, brother of Nicolo, entered a ship, laden with divers costly goods; and, spreading their sails, committed themselves to the deep. They arrived in safety at Constantinople, where they disposed of their cargo with advantage. They then determined to proceed together, in search of farther profit, to the Greater Sea;* and, having purchased many precious jewels, departed from Constantinople, and, entering a ship, sailed to Soldaia.† After remaining there some days, they resolved to proceed farther, and, mounting on horseback, came by continued journeys to Sara, the residence of Barka Khan, king and lord of the Tartars, who then inhabited Bulgaria.‡ That prince, who was much rejoiced at their arrival, received them very honourably and kindly. They gave him all the jewels brought from Constantinople, which he gladly accepted, and bestowed in return double their value. After they had dwelt in this city a year, a most furious war arose between Barka and Alau, the ruler of Eastern Tartary. Their forces were led against each other; and, after a very sharp contest and much slaughter on both sides, Alau was victorious.§ This war rendered it impossible for the

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* The name given at Constantinople to the *Black* Sea, as distinguished from the smaller one of Marmora, on which that capital is situated.

† Called now Soudak. This part of the Crimea, forming then the entrance into the northern regions of Europe and Asia, is described by Rubruquis, page 66.

‡ This is not to be confounded with the country of the same name on the Danube, but is applied to the great plains on the Volga, and by early travellers is often called Bulgaria the Greater. Barka was the brother of Baatu, and succeeded to his dominion. Sara, by Ramusio called Assara, is Sarai, a town on the Volga, founded by that prince, and not far from the modern Astracan.

§ Alau, in the histories of Asia named Hoolaku, was a grandson of Gengis, and brother of Mangou He had received the

Venetians to return with safety by the same road, and they thought it advisable to proceed eastward, and endeavour by another route to find their way back to Venice. Departing from Barka they happily reached a certain city named Oukaka, subject to the dominion of a western chief. Thence they passed a river named Tigris,* and wandered through a desert during seventeen successive days, finding no inhabitants, except Tartars dwelling in tents and subsisting by their cattle. They then came to a city in the province of Persia, named Bokhara,† the noblest in that country, governed by a king called Barak. Here, being unable to proceed, they remained three full years.

II.—They arrive at the Court of the Tartar Emperor of China.

While the brothers sojourned in Bokhara, it happened that Alau, lord of the East, despatched ambassadors to the sovereign of all the Tartars, who in their language is called the great khan, meaning the king of kings, and whose name was Kublai. They, on meeting the brothers, felt not a little wonder, having never seen any men from the Latin countries.‡ Addressing them courteously, they besought that they would accompany the embassy to the khan, promising much honour and wealth, since, though wonderfully

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command of that force which we have repeatedly seen stationed on the eastern frontier of Persia, and now occupied the greater part of that empire. In 1258, he rendered himself famous by the capture of Bagdad, and the subversion of the caliphate. The term Eastern applies only to his relative position in regard to the Volga. The details of this war will be given from the French edition at the close of the work.

* The travellers would doubtless be not a little bewildered in this disastrous journey through an unknown country. This certainly appears in their mistaking for the Tigris a river which undoubtedly was the Sirr or Sihon, the ancient Jaxartes.

† A well known city of Central Asia. The making it part of Persia may be ascribed to the same confusion of ideas which is adverted to in the last note.

‡ The term Latin during the middle ages was used to express the nations of Western Europe subject to the spiritual dominion of the pope. They were thus distinguished from the subjects and dependents of the Constantinopolitan empire, whose language was Greek.

desirous, he had never seen one of their nation. The Venetians made a suitable answer, and frankly agreed to comply with the request. They set out and continued a whole year travelling in a north-eastern direction; and though much delayed by heavy snows and the swelling of rivers, at length reached the residence of that mighty monarch, having beheld on their way many wonderful objects, which will be described hereafter in this book.

III.—Their Reception.

Kublai, illustrious for his benignity, received the brothers kindly and joyfully, being very desirous to see Latins. He urgently inquired what sort of emperor they had, how he lived and administered justice; asking questions also respecting the supreme pontiff, and all the acts and manners of the Christians—to which they made judicious replies in the Tartar language, which they had learned.

IV.—Sent back on an Embassy to the Pope.

This great king and master of all the Tartars in the world, and of all those regions, being informed respecting the actions of the Latins, was greatly pleased. Calling a council of his barons, he informed them, that he wished to send messengers to the pope, the lord of the Christians; which they unanimously approved. He then asked the brothers in friendly terms to be the bearers of his message; and this they prudently declared themselves ready and willing to undertake. He next ordered letters to be written, to be conveyed by them in company with a certain baron named Kogotal, whom he assigned as a companion. He instructed them, after the necessary salutations, to request of his holiness to send a hundred wise men, learned in all the seven arts, who might show to the idolaters, and others subject to his dominion, the diabolical nature of their law, and how that of the Christians was superior. Farther, he piously enjoined them to bring a portion of the oil of the lamp burning in Jerusalem before the sepulchre of our

Saviour.* Moreover, he gave to them a golden tablet marked with his seal, containing an express order, that wherever they went they should have their necessities supplied. Having received this, and taken leave of the king, barons, and the whole court, they mounted their horses and commenced their journey. After some days, Kogotal, the baron, at a city named Alau, fell sick and could not proceed; but the brothers went on till they came safely to Laias,† in Armenia. In this journey, however, owing to the bad roads, and the large rivers which they could not cross on horseback, three years were consumed. Wherever they went, on showing the golden tablet, they were received with the greatest honours, and supplied with whatever they wanted.

V.—Find him dead, and await a new Election.

Departing from Laias in April 1269, the brothers arrived at Acre, where they learned with much grief that his holiness Clement IV. was dead.‡ They therefore went to Theobald, viscount of Piacenza, who resided there as legate of the apostolical see, and was a man of high authority and virtue. They related to him the cause why they wished to visit the supreme pontiff. He was struck with admiration, and revolving in his mind, that the holy Roman church and the Christian faith might hence derive the greatest benefit, advised them to wait till another pope should be named, to whom they might deliver their embassy. They therefore determined to spend the interval in visiting their families at Venice. Departing from Acre, they proceeded to Negropont, and thence to their native city. Here Messer Nicolo found that his wife, whom he left pregnant, had died, leaving a son named Marco, the same who wrote this book.§

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* These sentiments are doubtless coloured, yet we have repeatedly seen that the princes of this race were desirous to be on friendly terms with the professors of every religion.

† The Giazza of Ramusio. It is Aias, on the Gulf of Scanderoon.

‡ This event had taken place in November 1268.

§ The chronology of the narrative down to this period is very perplexing, and there are manifestly errors even in the purest

Waiting the appointment of another pope, the travellers spent two full years at Venice.

VI.—Their Return to Kublai.

At last seeing that no pontiff was elected, and unwilling to delay their return to the great khan, they departed, taking with them Marco, son of Nicolo. They repaired to Acre, and told the legate, that having tarried too long, and there being no appearance of an election, they must beg permission, in conformity with that monarch's injunctions, to take the portion of oil from the lamp burning before the sepulchre. Having obtained his consent, they went to Jerusalem, took what they desired, and returned, when he gave them letters, with permission to depart. They proceeded from Acre to Laias; but during their stay there, were informed that the legate himself had been appointed pope, under the name of Gregory X. of Piacenza, being

versions. The first departure was in 1250, according to the two Paris editions, the printed Pipino, the Basle, and Ramusio. (The Crusca and Pucci are here wanting.) Two MSS. of Pipino indeed make it 1252; but this does not help us much; for by a subsequent statement it appears that the war which obliged them to leave the court of Barka, after remaining a year, broke out in 1261. None of the editions intimate any stay at Constantinople or Soudak, except the Strozziani MS. quoted by Count Boni (Il Millione, i. 73), which represents them as stopping some time at both places; but this being comparatively modern, is little likely to correct the errors of earlier and better versions. Besides, there is another element to adjust. Marco being born soon after his father's departure, his age would fix the date; but here the variations are most perplexing. The French makes it at Nicolo's arrival to be 12; the Paris Latin, the Basle, and Pipino, 15; the Berlin MS. 17; Ramusio, 19; which last Mr Marsden admits as probably adopted in order to accord with the 1250. It would have made him a grown man on his arrival in China, which would scarcely agree with the language there held. Mr Marsden inclines to make the age 15, and the departure 1255. I shall only observe, that if we suppose an error of 10 years (the simplest that could be made), and the real departure 1260, this would agree with all the particulars of the journey, and very nearly with the age of 12, as given in the French edition. Without venturing a very positive opinion, it may be noticed that there is historical evidence for the main dates of the arrival at Barka's court in 1260, at Acre in 1269, and the departure thence in 1271 or 1272.

the same who afterwards held a council at Lyons, on the Rhone.* The new pontiff sent a messenger after them, desiring their immediate return; and they joyfully obeyed, making the voyage in a galley prepared for them by the King of Armenia. They paid their homage to his holiness, who received them graciously, loaded them with many honours, and gave them two very learned friars, of the order of preachers, the wisest that could be found in those parts, named Nicolo of Vicenza and William of Tripoli, to accompany them to the great khan. He bestowed on them letters and privileges, instructed them in the message which he wished to be conveyed to that monarch, and gave his benediction to Nicolo, Maffio, Marco, and the two friars. They then proceeded together to Laias; but while there, the Soldan of Babylonia, named Bonduchdaree, came with a mighty army to attack the city.† In these circumstances, the preachers, struck with the fear of war, and with the dangers already encountered, gave to Nicolo and Maffio certain letters, and resolved to proceed no farther. Then the brothers commenced their journey, and by constant marches arrived safely at a very rich and powerful city named Clemenfu,‡ where the great khan resided. The observations made by them on this expedition will be narrated afterwards in the proper place; but on account of the severe weather, as well as the difficulty and danger of passing the rivers, they consumed in it three years and a half. When their return became known to the khan, he rejoiced exceedingly, and ordered forty of

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* The election of Gregory X. actually took place in 1271-1272, and Mr Marsden (pp. 17, 21) has collected evidence that he then resided at Acre as legate.

† This is Bibars, the Mameluke soldan of Egypt, who, for several years before and after this period, ravaged many parts of Syria and Asia Minor. Cairo in that age was frequently named Babylonia, of which we shall see repeated instances.—Marsden, p. 755.

‡ Elsewhere, Clemenisu, Clenensu. It is very difficult to identify this place, there being nothing to fix its position, and no name of a Chinese town resembling it. Mr Marsden (p. 23), considers it as most probably Tai-yuen-fou, capital of Shan-see, where Du Halde mentions that Kublai resided some time, while a new city was building at Kambalu.

his messengers to go to meet them, by whom they were supplied with every necessary, and loaded with honours.

VII. They are honourably received.

Having reached this great city, where the monarch had his abode, they went to his palace, presenting themselves most humbly on bended knees. He desired them to rise, and asked how they did; they replied, that, by the grace of God, they were well, especially since they had found him healthy and cheerful. He then inquired about their transactions with the supreme pontiff, when they explained to him all that they had done, delivering the letters confided to them by Pope Gregory. He received them graciously, commending them for their fidelity and attention. They next presented the oil from the sepulchre, which he reverently accepted. He inquired, who was that young man with them, to which Nicolo replied: "my lord, he is your servant, my son." "Then," said the great khan, "he is welcome, I am much pleased with him." He celebrated their return by a joyful feast; and while they remained in his court, they were honoured before all his barons.

VIII.—Employments and Missions of Marco.

During this stay, Messer Marco acquired the Tartar and four other languages, so as to speak and write them well; he learned also their manners, and became in all things exceedingly sensible and sagacious.* When the great khan saw him display so much worth and prudence, he sent him as his messenger to a very distant land, which it required six months to reach. He returned and reported his embassy very sensibly, relating many new things respecting the countries through which he had travelled; while other ambassadors, being able to say nothing, except about the special message intrusted to them, were accounted foolish and ignorant by the khan, who was greatly delighted to become acquainted with the varieties of nations. Messer Marco,

* We are to recollect this is written by Rusticians, not by Marco, though doubtless with his cognizance.

aware of this, studied all these strange objects, and thus pleased beyond measure his majesty and the barons, who predicted that, if he lived, he would become an eminent man. In short, he remained in the court of the khan seventeen years, and never ceased to be employed as an ambassador. The other chiefs then began to envy the honours paid to him, and his knowledge of the country, which exceeded that of any other person who ever visited it.*

IX.—They seek to return Home.

After Nicolo, Maffio, and Marco had remained long at the court of the great khan, and accumulated very considerable wealth in gold and jewels, they felt a strong desire to revisit their native country. Nicolo therefore took an opportunity one day, when the monarch seemed in particularly good humour, to throw himself at his feet, and solicit for them all permission to depart; but the sovereign was now so much attached to his visiters that he would by no means listen to this proposal.† It happened, however, that the Queen Bolgana, the spouse of Argon, lord of the East,‡ died, and in her last will enjoined that he should receive no wife unless of her family. He therefore sent as ambassadors to the khan three barons, Aulatam, Alpusca, and Goza, with a great train, requesting a lady of the same lineage with the deceased queen. The monarch received the embassy with joy, and selected a young princess of that house. Every thing being ar-

* Ramusio says that he regularly committed them to writing. This is in no other edition, and the fact I think very doubtful.

† A sentence is here taken from Ramusio; but we have hesitated to add, on his sole authority, the offer to double all their possessions, and grant whatever they desired.

‡ Argon or Arghun, the grandson of Hoolaku, is well known as having succeeded in 1284 to the sovereignty of Persia and the adjacent countries. Ramusio calls him "sovereign of India," for which Mr Marsden (p. 30) finds much apology necessary; but the expression in the text, taken from the Paris editions, clears all difficulty; for we have seen that Eastern was the name given in Europe to the Tartars ruling over this region.—See Note, pp. 96, 97.

ranged, and a numerous train of attendants appointed, they were graciously dismissed, and began their return; but after travelling eight months, their advance was rendered impossible by fresh wars that had arisen among the Tartar princes. They were therefore very reluctantly obliged to retrace their steps, and state the cause that had arrested their progress. It happened that at that time Marco arrived from a voyage to India, and, by relating the novelties he had observed, pleased those envoys very much, proving himself well fitted to guide them by this route, which he recommended as shorter and easier than that by land. They therefore besought as a favour of the khan, that the Latins might accompany them and the queen. The sovereign granted this favour, yet unwillingly, on account of his love for them.

X.—Voyage, and Arrival at Venice.

When that great monarch saw that they were about to depart, he called them before him, and delivering golden tablets signed with the royal seal, ordered that they should have free passage through his land, and that their charges, with those of all their family, should be every where defrayed. He caused to be prepared fourteen ships, each with four masts, and many with twelve sails; upon which the barons, the lady, and the three brothers took leave, and, with numerous attendants, went on board. The prince gave them their expenses for two years; and after sailing three months, they came to a certain island named Java, where are many wonderful things, which I shall relate in this book. They then departed from it; and I must tell you that they sailed through the seas of India full eighteen months, and saw many strange objects, which will also be hereafter described. At length they came to the court of King Argon, but found that he was already dead, when it was determined to give the princess in marriage to Casan,* his son. I must tell you, that though in that vessel there em-

* More properly Ghazan, who did not, however, ascend the throne till 1295.—Marsden, p. 36.

barked full 600 persons, exclusive of mariners, all died except eighteen;* and they found the dominion of the land of Argon held by Achatu,† to whom they very tenderly recommended the lady on the part of the great khan. Casan was then at a place on the borders of Persia, which has its name from the *arbor secco*, where an army of 60,000 men was assembled to guard certain positions against hostile irruption. They accordingly went thither, fulfilled their mission, and then returned to the residence of Achatu,‡ where they reposed during the space of nine months. They then took leave and went on their way, when the monarch presented four golden tablets, with instructions that they should be honoured, and all the expenses of themselves and their family defrayed. This was fully executed, so that they frequently went accompanied by 200 horsemen.§ I have

* This is the statement in the two Paris, the Crusca, and the Pucci editions. The printed one of Pipino has only eighty-two out of the 600; but the Latin museum MS. has 582, thus substantially agreeing with the others, and making it probable that the 500 was omitted only by an error of the press. On the other hand, Ramusio, after having said that four of the vessels had crews of fully 250 men (mariners, we presume, included), states, that of the whole, about 600 died, among whom were two of the ambassadors; but that all the females, except one, survived.

† Kaikhatu, uncle to Ghazan, who was unable to prevent his holding the sovereignty for several years. Being murdered, however, by a usurper, the latter marched to avenge his death, triumphed, and became sovereign of Persia. Though of puny stature, he was considered a wise and able prince.—Marsden, p. 36.

‡ This statement is in Ramusio only; yet its correctness is rendered highly probable by oriental history, which shows that Ghazan resided at this period in Khorassan. Mr Marsden (p. 110) seems to prove that the *arbor secco* meant the plane-tree, which flourishes particularly in that part of Persia, and is called dry from not yielding any fruit.

§ Ramusio has, "This could not have been dispensed with, as Achatu's government was unpopular, and the people were ready to commit outrages, on which they would not have ventured under their lawful sovereign." This rather accords with the tenor of history, which represents Achatu as dissolute and tyrannical, and proves him to have fallen a sacrifice to an insurrection among his chiefs. The sentence, however, is so much out of harmony with the rest of the chapter, that I cannot believe it to have emanated from Marco.

also to tell you to the honour of those three Latins, in whom the great khan had placed such confidence, appointing them to conduct the Queen Cocacin, with a daughter of the King of Manji,* to Argon, the lord of the East;—that those two young and beautiful ladies were guarded by them as if they had been their daughters, and bestowed upon them the veneration due to fathers. Indeed, Cocacin and her husband Casan, now reigning, treated the messengers with such kindness, that there was nothing they would not have done for them; and when they were about to depart, the queen grieved very much, and even shed tears.† Thus, after much time and many labours, by the grace of God they came to Trebisond, then to Constantinople, Negropont, and finally to Venice. They arrived in the year 1295, bringing with them great riches, and giving thanks to God, who had delivered them from many labours and dangers.

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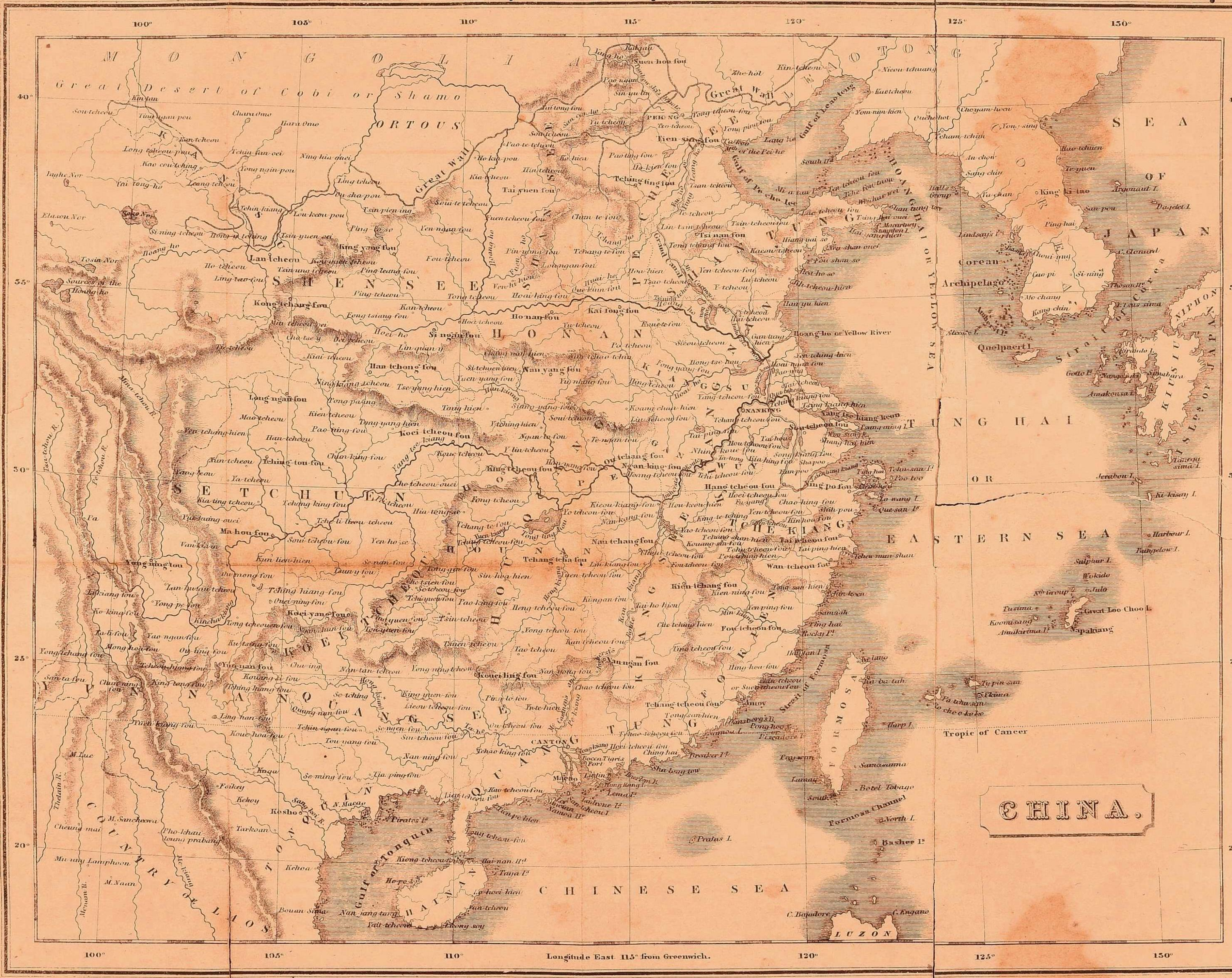
* This princess of Manji appears only in the French and Crusca editions; but, on such authorities, I do not hesitate to introduce her to my readers. The writer here evidently goes back to state particulars formerly omitted.

† Ramusio has, "In the course of the journey, our travellers received intelligence of the grand khan having departed this life, which put an end to all hopes of their being able to return into those regions." Kublai died early in 1294; it was therefore quite possible the news might reach them. But what shall we say to the expressed *hope* (softened by Mr Marsden into *prospect*), after the extreme anxiety they had felt to return to Venice? Besides, we find the traveller, in 1298, speaking of that monarch as alive, and calculating what age he would then be, in a manner quite inconsistent with Mr Marsden's gratuitous assumption of his having copied from former notes, overlooking so great an event. My impression is, that this chapter in Ramusio has been gone over by some one acquainted with Asiatic history, but not by Marco himself.



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PART I.

Description of China, and of the Court of the Emperor Kublai.

Kublai, Great Khan of the Tartars, and Emperor of China—His War with Nayan—Favour for the Christians—Description of Kambalu (Pe-king)—An Insurrection there—Great Festivals celebrated by the Emperor—Their Order and Pomp—His extensive Hunting Expeditions—Leopards, Falcons, and other Animals employed—Mode of pursuing and taking the Game—Hunting Palace at Shandu in Tartary—At Cianganor—Paper Money—Large Revenue—Arrangement of his Government and Officers—Bounty towards the People—Manners and Superstitions of the Chinese—Marco Polo's Journey through the Western Provinces—Thibet, Bengal, and the neighbouring Countries—Return to the Vicinity of Pe-king—Journey through the Eastern Provinces—The Yellow River—Manji or Southern China—Its Conquest by Kublai—Character of the deposed King—Nan-king and other great Cities—The Kiang—Its immense Trade and Shipping—Kin-sai, the Capital—Its extraordinary Extent and Magnificence—Splendour of its Palace—Journey through Tche-kiang and Fo-kien—The Porcelain Manufacture—Arrival at Zai-tun or Amoy.

I.—Power and Magnificence of Kublai.

Now I am to give you a wonderful account of the greatest king of the Tartars, still reigning, named Kublai, or lord of lords. That name is assuredly well merited, since he is the most powerful in people, in lands, and in treasure, that is, or ever was, from the creation of Adam to the present day; and by the statements to be made in this book, every man shall be satisfied that he really is so. Whosoever descends in the direct line

from Gengis is entitled to be master of all the Tartars, and Kublai is the sixth great khan. He began to reign in the year of our Lord 1256,* and maintained the dominion by his valour, address, and wisdom. His brothers sought to oppose his succession, but by bravery and right he triumphed over them.† From the beginning of his reign, forty-two years have elapsed to the present day, in the year 1298. He is now full eighty-five years old, and before his accession commanded many armies, when he approved himself good at weapons, and a brave captain. But since that time he has joined the army only once, which was in the year 1286, and I will tell you on what occasion.

II.—Insurrection raised by Nayan.

You must understand that a certain cousin‡ of his, named Nayan, who, like his ancestors, was his vassal, yet had many lands and provinces of his own, and could raise 400,000 horsemen, being thirty years old, refused to remain longer in subjection, and assumed the whole sovereignty to himself. He sent to a certain great lord, named Kaidu, a nephew of that monarch, but in rebellion against him, and desirous of doing him the greatest injury. To him Nayan proposed to attack the monarch on one side, while he himself advanced on another, so that they might acquire the dominion over his whole territory. Kaidu declared himself well pleased, and promised to be ready at the time appointed. He could bring into the field 100,000 cavalry; and those two assembled a mighty army

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* Ramusio makes him only twenty-seven years old at his accession, which Mr Marsden (p. 265) admits to be very improbable. The statement here given from the Paris editions makes him forty-three, which agrees with the best authorities. He was not the *sixth* but only the *fifth* of this line of sovereigns. We shall afterwards see how Marco fell into this error.

† His brother, Artigbuga, after Mangou's death, was proclaimed at Karakorum; nor was it till after a severe struggle, that Kublai prevailed.—Marsden, p. 265.

‡ In all the editions he is called uncle, which does not at all agree with their respective ages. Mr Marsden (p. 266) shows that he must have been a more distant relative.

on horseback and foot, and marched against the great khan.

III.—Kublai prepares to meet him.

When Kublai learned these things, he was not at all alarmed, but declared, that he wished he might never wear a crown, nor hold sway over a kingdom, if he did not bring the traitors to an evil death. He therefore made his whole army be prepared in twenty-two days, and so secretly, that nothing was known beyond his own council. He raised full 360,000 mounted soldiers; and 100,000 infantry; and the reason of their number not being greater, was, that they consisted only of his huntsmen, and those immediately round his person, the rest being employed in carrying on distant wars; for if he could have assembled his whole host, the multitude would have been such as no man could have numbered. He then called his astrologers, and asked of them if he would be victorious; they answered, that he would do to his enemies according to his pleasure.*

IV.—Description of the Battle.

The great khan having assembled these forces, took his departure, and in twenty days came to a vast plain, where Nayan had assembled all his troops, amounting to 400,000 warriors. The khan took much care to scour the paths, and intercept all who could have carried the intelligence; so that when he approached at dawn of day, the rebel was lying asleep in bed with a favourite wife, not having the least dread of his arrival, and, consequently, no guard on any side of the camp. Kublai then advanced, having a tower fixed upon four elephants, whereon were placed his ensigns, so that he could be seen by the whole army

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* In Ramusio *only*, there is a sentence intimating that this was a mere manœuvre to encourage his men. This reflection was, we are convinced, interpolated in a more enlightened age than that of the traveller. The two Paris, the Crusca, Pipino, and all the early editions, mention it as real information obtained from those personages.

His men, divided into bands of twenty thousand, surrounded in a moment the adverse force, each soldier having a footman on the crupper behind him, with a bow in his hand. When Nayan and his men saw their camp thus encircled by the khan and his host, they were seized with amaze; yet they ran to arms, formed themselves in order of battle, and were soon prepared to strike. Then began the beating on many instruments, and singing with loud voices; for it is the custom of the Tartars, that until the horn termed *naccar* is winded the troops do not engage. But when that grand trumpet of the great khan was sounded, all the other performers began playing, and raising their voices very loud, making a noise that was truly most wonderful. Then the two armies rushed against each other with sword, spear, and lance, while the footmen were prepared with bow and quiver. The battle was fierce and cruel; the arrows filled the air like rain; horses and horsemen were seen falling to the ground; and the tumult was such, that if Jove had thundered, he could not have been heard. Nayan was a baptized Christian, and therefore had the cross upon his standard.* Never, in our day, was there so hard and terrible a combat, nor so many assembled on one field, especially of horsemen; and the number who fell on both sides was fearful to behold. The battle continued from nine in the morning till midday; but the great khan at last remained master of the field. When Nayan and his men saw that they could hold out no longer, they betook themselves to flight; but it availed them nothing; he was taken, and all his troops surrendered.†

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* We have had ample occasion to observe, that a certain form of Christianity having, during that age, made considerable progress in Central Asia, was embraced by several monarchs. Others who did not go so far, yet courted the good opinion of its professors, and sought from them omens and imaginary means of success.

† This war of Kublai with Nayan and Kaidu is related by De Guignes, from oriental authorities, with a few variations, usual in different narratives of such events.

V.—The Death of Nayan.

When that great monarch heard that Nayan was taken, he ordered him to be put to death in the manner I am now to tell you. He was wrapped in a carpet, and violently tossed to and fro till he died. This mode was adopted, that, being of imperial lineage, his blood might not be shed on the ground, nor his cries ascend into the air. When that battle was gained, four of his provinces paid tribute and homage to the great khan. These were Cicorcia, Cauli, Bastol, and Suchintin.

VI.—Kublai silences the Mockery of the Jews and Saracens.

When the monarch had achieved this triumph, the Saracens, Pagans, Jews, and other generations of men who believe not in God, expressed wonder at the cross which the vanquished leader had carried on his standard, and said in derision of the Christians,—"see how the cross of your God has aided Nayan and his people." They made such a noise on this subject, that it came to the ears of the prince, who was much displeased, and sending for the Christians, said to them,—"if your God did not assist Nayan, he acted with great justice, because he is a good and righteous God. Nayan was a traitor and rebel against his lord, and therefore God did well in not assisting him." Then the Christians replied,—"O, great sire! thou hast spoken the truth, for the cross will aid nothing unjust, and he met only what he well deserved." Having gained this victory, the great khan returned to his capital, Kambalu, with much festival and rejoicing. When the other king, named Kaidu, heard how his ally had been worsted, he was struck with fear, and did not attempt to lead his army against the monarch.* Now you have seen how that prince went to battle, and for what cause, while on all other occasions he sent his son and his barons; but this

* Kaidu, however, continued to maintain his independent rule over a great part of Turkestan. We shall hear more of this prince towards the end of the narrative.

war was of such magnitude that it seemed to deserve his own immediate presence.

VII.—His Opinions as to the Christian Religion.

The grand khan, having obtained this splendid victory, returned with great pomp and triumph to his capital of Kambalu. He arrived there in November, and remained till after March, in which month our festival of Easter occurred. Aware that this was one of our most solemn periods, he commanded all the Christians to attend him, bringing with them their book containing the four gospels. He caused it, in a very respectful manner, to be repeatedly perfumed with incense, ordering all his nobles present to do the same. Such was the custom upon each of the two great festivals of Easter and Christmas; and he followed the same course as that pursued by the Saracens, Jews, and idolaters. Being asked the reason of this conduct, he replied,—"there are four great prophets revered and worshipped by different classes of mankind. The Christians hold Christ as their divinity; the Saracens, Mohammed; the Jews, Moses; and the idolaters, Sogomombar Khan, their most distinguished idol. I honour and respect all the four, and seek aid from them, as any one of them may really be supreme in heaven." Yet, from the behaviour of his majesty towards the Christians, he evidently believed their faith the best and truest; observing, that it enjoined nothing on its professors that was not full of virtue and holiness. He would not indeed allow the cross to be borne before them in processions, because, as he said, on it so exalted a person had been nailed and put to death. Some may ask, why if thus partial to the true faith, he did not openly embrace it? He stated his reason to Nicolo and Maffio Polo, when, on his sending them ambassadors to the Pope, they ventured to address to him a few words on the subject. "Why," said he, "should I become a Christian? You must yourselves see that the professors of that faith now in this country are ignorant and weak, unable to do any thing extraordinary, while the idola-

ters have power to do whatever they please. While I am seated at table, the cups, filled with wine or other beverage, come to me from the middle of the hall spontaneously, without being touched by any human hand. They are able to control bad weather, and force it to retire to any quarter of the heavens; they can perform other wonderful things of the same nature. You have witnessed their idols exercising the faculty of speech, and predicting whatever events are inquired into. Should I become a convert and profess Christianity, the nobles of my court, and others disinclined to the faith, will ask what adequate motives have induced me to be baptized. What wonders, what miracles, they will say, have its ministers performed? But the idolaters declare, that their exhibitions are made through their own holiness and the might of their idols. To this I shall be unable to make any answer, and be considered as labouring under a grievous mistake, while the heathen teachers, by the profound art which they display, may easily accomplish my death. Return, however, to your pontiff, and present to him my request, that he would send a hundred persons learned in your law, who, when confronted with the others, will be able to control them, and while proving themselves endowed with similar skill, shall render their antagonists unable in their presence to carry on these practices. On witnessing this, I will interdict the exercise of their religion, and suffer myself to be baptized. This example will be followed by all my nobility, and by my subjects in general; so that the Christians in these regions will become more numerous than those inhabiting your own country." From this language it evidently appears that had the pope sent out persons duly qualified to preach the gospel, the great khan would have embraced that faith, for which he certainly entertained a strong predilection.*

* This curious chapter is one of those found only in Ramusio. There is no decided internal proof against its being genuine, and the conduct of Kublai sufficiently accords with that usually held by Tartar monarchs. Yet there is, I think, clear evidence

VIII.—Rewards bestowed on his Soldiers.

Now let us tell of the officers and barons of the great khan, and how he rewarded those who fought with him in the battle against Nayan. To those who commanded 100 men, he gave the command of 1000, and to those of 1000 that of 10,000 ; and he bestowed, according to their rank, tablets of gold or of silver, on all of which was written,—"By the might of the great God, and by the favour which he gave to our emperor : may that prince be blessed, and may all those who do not obey him die and be destroyed." Those who hold these documents enjoy certain privileges, with written instructions how they are to exercise their authority. He who commands 100,000 men receives a golden one, weighing 300 saggi, under which is sculptured a lion on one side, and on the other the sun and moon. Those who bear these noble tablets have instructions, that whenever they ride they should bear above their head an umbrella of gold, and as often as they are seated, it should be upon silver. There are also tablets whereon is sculptured a gerfalcon, which he gives to three great barons, who have then equal authority with himself. They can take, whenever they please, and lead from place to place, the troops and horses of any prince or king ; and whoever dares to disobey in any thing their will and mandate, must die as a rebel to the sovereign.* Now let us speak of the outward form and manners of this mighty prince.

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of interpolation. The following chapter, in all the early editions, states the amount of the rewards which the sovereign gave to the officers who had distinguished themselves in the battle against Nayan. In Ramusio, dropping all allusion to that event, it states those which he *usually gives* on such occasions. The change is obviously made, because the insertion of the present chapter broke the connexion, a blemish that would have become evident had the subject been treated in the first manner, which yet is doubtless the natural and original one.

* It is still the practice of the Chinese government to indicate rank by richly ornamented tablets, which, in the vulgar language of Canton, are called *chops*. They are now of cloth ; but the Tartars, a people of a different genius, might very pos-

IX.—The Person of Kublai—His Wives, Concubines, and Sons.

The great khan, lord of lords, named Kublai, is of a fine middle size, neither too tall nor too short; he has a beautiful fresh complexion, and well-proportioned limbs. His colour is fair and vermeil like the rose, his eyes dark and fine, his nose well formed and placed. He has four ladies, who always rank as his wives; and the eldest son, born to him by one of them, succeeds as the rightful heir of the empire. They are named empresses; each bears his name, and holds a court of her own; there is not one who has not 300 beautiful maidens, with eunuchs, and many other male and female attendants, so that some of the courts of these ladies contain 10,000 persons; and when he wishes to visit any one, he makes her come to his apartment, or sometimes goes to hers. He maintains also a number of concubines. There is a race of Tartars who are called Migrat or Ungrat,* and are a very handsome people. From them are selected 100 girls,† the most beautiful in all their country, who are conducted to court. He makes them be guarded by the ladies of the palace; and they are examined if they have a sweet breath, and be sound in all their limbs. Those that are approved in every respect wait upon their great lord in the following

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sibly prefer the precious metals. The Venetian saggio is the sixth part of an ounce, making thus the largest tablet fifty ounces. The term Mandarin, being modern and Portuguese, could not be expected here.

* Ungut, *Ramusio.* This appears to be the country of the Eighurs or Uighurs, inhabiting Turfan and Hami, to the west of China. They are of the Turkish race, and noted for the beauty of their persons.—Marsden, p. 284.

† Ramusio says that they are valued at from sixteen to twenty or twenty-one *carats*, the highest number being required in the case of his majesty. Mr Marsden (p. 285), considering the term as meaning four grains of gold, laments that the most brilliant of these beauties should be reckoned worth only 13s. 4d. The carat, however, is used also in estimating the diamond, when it bears surely a higher value. Considering, however, that the term is entirely European, and the statement found in no early edition, I incline to reject it altogether.

order: six of them attend every three days, then other six come in their place, and so on throughout the year. It may be asked, if the people of this province do not feel aggrieved by having their children thus forcibly taken away. Assuredly not: on the contrary, they regard it as a favour and an honour; and the fathers feel highly gratified when their daughters are thus selected. If, says one, my daughter is born under an auspicious planet, his majesty can best fulfil her destiny by marrying her more nobly than I can do. On the contrary, if the young lady, by bad conduct or any misfortune, be found disqualified, he attributes the disappointment to her malignant stars.* Know, too, that the great khan has by his wives twenty-two sons; the elder was named Gyngym Khan, and was to be lord of all the empire after his father; but he died, leaving a son named Temur, who in time will succeed; he is a wise and good man, tried in many battles.† The monarch has also twenty-five sons by his concubines; and each is a great baron; and of the twenty-two sons by his four wives, seven reign over large kingdoms, like wise and good men, because they resemble their father,—and he is the best ruler of nations and conductor of wars in the world. Now I have told you about himself, his wives, sons, and concubines; next I will relate how he holds his court.

X.—His magnificent Palace in Kambalu.

He resides in the vast city of Kambalu, three months in the year, December, January, and February, and has here his great palace, which I will now describe.

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* The reader has already seen this tyrannical custom even in the rude court of Mangou Khan. It is proper to notice that this satisfaction of the people in having their daughters thus taken from them is found only in Ramusio, not in any of the early editions.

† Temur actually succeeded his grandfather in 1294, and is celebrated in the Chinese annals as a mild, upright, intelligent, and liberal prince. Boni, vol. ii. p. 167.

It is a complete square, a mile long on every side,* so that the whole is four miles in circuit; and in each angle is a very fine edifice, containing bows, arrows, cords, saddles, bridles, and all other implements of war. In the middle of the wall between these four edifices are others, making altogether eight, filled with stores, and each containing only a single article. Towards the south are five gates, the middle one very large, never opened nor shut unless when the great khan is to pass through; while on the other side is one by which all enter in common.† Within that wall is another, containing eight edifices similarly constructed; in which is lodged the wardrobe of the sovereign. These walls enclose the palace of that mighty lord, which is the greatest that ever was seen. The floor rises ten palms above the ground, and the roof is exceedingly lofty. The walls of the chambers and stairs are all covered with gold and silver, and adorned with pictures of dragons, horses, and other races of animals. The hall is so spacious that 6000 can sit down to banquet; and the number of apartments is incredible. The roof is externally painted with red, blue, green, and other colours, and is so varnished that it shines like crystal, and is seen to a great distance around. It is also very strongly and durably built. Between the walls are pleasant meadows filled with various living creatures, as white stags, the musk animal, deer, wild goats, ermines, and other beautiful creatures. The whole enclosure is full of animals, except the path by which men pass. On the other side, towards the south, is a magnificent lake, whither many

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* Ramusio has *eight* miles on each side. This immense extent is not supported by the Paris editions, the Crusca, and Pipino, which are according to the text. The French edition of 1556 has two leagues in circuit. Astley (vol. iv. p. 11) has collated the modern descriptions, which agree closely with that of Polo, and make the whole circuit only fifteen li, or four miles and three quarters. Count Boni points out that Oderic, in about 1330, states only four miles. There seems no doubt, therefore, of the corruption of Ramusio's text.

† The reader will recollect the same arrangement described by Carpini in the great orda or tent of Cuyné Khan.

kinds of fish are brought and nourished. A river enters and flows out; but the fish are retained by iron gratings. Towards the north, about a bowshot from the palace, Kublai has constructed a mound, full a hundred paces high and a mile in circuit, all covered with evergreen trees which never shed their leaves. When he hears of a beautiful tree, he causes it to be dug up, with all the roots and the earth round it, and to be conveyed to him on the backs of elephants, whence the eminence has been made verdant all over, and is called the green mountain. On the top is a palace, also covered with verdure; it and the trees are so lovely that all who look upon them feel delight and joy. In the vicinity is another palace, where resides the grandson of the great khan, Temur, who is to reign after him, and who follows the same life and customs as his grandsire. He has already a golden bull and the imperial seal; but he has no authority while his grandfather lives.

XI.—Description of the City of Kambalu.

Having described to you the palaces, I will tell you of the great city of Cathay, which contains them. Near it is another large and splendid one, also named Kambalu, which means in our language city of the lord; but the monarch, finding by astrology that this town would rebel, built another near it, divided only by a river, and bearing the same name, to which its inhabitants were compelled to remove.* It forms a regular square, six miles on each side, and thus twenty-four miles in circumference. It is surrounded by walls of earth, ten paces thick and twenty in height; yet the upper part becomes gradually thinner, so that at top the breadth is

* This is the statement in the two Paris editions, and in the Crusca, which calls it Camblau; but in Ramusio the new city is named Tai-du, more properly Ta-tou or the great court; and there are oriental accounts of its bearing this name. Here, therefore, as on other occasions, though we may doubt that the statement came from Marco, it appears to be from some well-informed quarter.—Marsden, p. 300.

only three paces. There are twelve gates, each containing an edifice, making one in each square of that wall, and filled with men, who guard the place. The streets are so broad and so straight that from one gate another is visible. It contains many beautiful houses and palaces, and a very large one in the midst, containing a steeple with a large bell, which at night sounds three times; after which no man must leave the city without some urgent necessity, as of sickness, or a woman about to bear a child. At each gate a thousand men keep guard, not from dread of any enemy, but in reverence of the monarch who dwells within it, and to prevent injury by robbers.*

XII.—The Suburbs—Merchants.

When the monarch comes to his chief city, he remains in his noble palace three days and no more, when he holds a great court, making high festival and rejoicing with his ladies. There is a vast abundance of people through all the suburbs of Kambalu, which are twelve in number, one corresponding to each gate; no one can count the number of residents; and they contain as stately edifices as any in the city, except the king's palace. No one is allowed to be buried within the city; and no females of bad character can reside there, but must have their dwellings in the suburbs, where there are said to be no fewer than 20,000. There are brought also to Kambalu the most costly articles in the world, the finest productions of India, as precious stones and

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* Kambalu is not a Chinese term, but is a corruption of that of Khan-baligh, "the City of the Khan," used by the Arabians and Persians. There is no doubt of its being that now called Pe-king. The square form, the breadth of the streets, and their stretching in a direct line, have been observed by all travellers, and indeed generally characterize Chinese cities. The lofty structures rising above the gates, and filled with armed troops, are noticed by Le Comte and Staunton. The shutting of these is still announced by the sound of a bell, and that of Pe-king is said to be the largest in the world, weighing 120,000 lbs. There is no mention of it in Ramusio.—Marsden, pp. 300, 305, 306. Astley, vol. iv. p. 8-10.

pearls, with all the produce of Cathay and the surrounding countries, in order to supply the lords and the barons and ladies who reside there. Numerous merchants, likewise, bring more than a thousand wagons laden with grain; and all who are within a hundred miles of the city come thither to purchase what they want.*

XIII.—Wicked Administration of Achmac—Insurrection.

I will hereafter particularly mention a council of twelve persons, having power to dispose at will of the lands, governments, and all things belonging to the state. One of these, a Saracen, named Achmac, had acquired an extraordinary influence with the great khan; indeed his master was so infatuated with him that he allowed him the most uncontrolled license. It was even discovered after his death that he had employed spells to fascinate the khan, and compel him to give full credit to what was told him by his favourite, who was thus enabled to conduct public affairs according to his pleasure. He disposed of all the commands and public offices; passed sentence upon offenders; and when desirous to inflict an injury on any one whom he hated, needed only to go to the emperor and say, "such a man has been guilty of an offence against your majesty, and deserves death." The monarch usually replied, do as you judge best, and Achmac then ordered him to be immediately executed. So manifest were the proofs of his influence, and of the sovereign's implicit reliance on his statements, that no one dared to contradict him on any occasion; even those highest in office stood in awe of him. Any one charged by him with a capital offence, whatever means he might employ to justify himself and refute the accusation, could not find an advocate; for none dared to oppose the purpose of Achmac. Thus

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* Marsden, pp. 307, 308, quotes good authorities for the suburbs being twelve in number, and very extensive. From Staunton's account, however, they appear to be now less considerable. The influx of foreigners, welcomed under the Mongol dynasty, must be much diminished under the present exclusive system.

he caused unjustly the death of many, and was also enabled to indulge his unlawful propensities. Whenever he saw a woman who pleased him, he contrived either to add her to the number of his wives, or to lead her into a criminal intimacy. On receiving information of any man having a beautiful daughter, he despatched emissaries with instructions to say to him, "what are your views with regard to this handsome girl? the best thing you can do is to give her to the lord-vicegerent;" for so they termed Achmac, implying that he was his majesty's representative; "we will induce him to appoint you to a certain government or office for three years." The father was thus tempted to give away his child; and as soon as the affair was arranged, the other went and informed the emperor that a government was vacant, or would become so on a particular day, and recommended the parent as well qualified to discharge its duties. His majesty consented; and the appointment was immediately made. Thus, either through ambition to hold high office, or dread of his power, he obtained possession of the fairest females, under the denomination of wives or of concubines. Besides, he had twenty-five sons, who held the highest offices in the state, and, availing themselves of his authority, were guilty of similar violent and licentious proceedings. He had likewise accumulated great wealth, since every one who obtained an appointment found it requisite to make him a liberal present.

During a period of twenty-two years, he exercised this absolute authority. At length the Kataians, natives of the country, unable to endure longer his multiplied acts of injustice and violation of domestic rights, began to devise means of bringing about his death and the overthrow of the government. Among the leading persons in this plot was Chenku, a commander of 6000 men, in whose family his dissolute conduct had spread dishonour. He proposed the measure to one of his nation, named Vanku, who commanded 10,000 men, and suggested for its execution the period when the great khan, having completed

his three months' residence in Kambalu, should have departed for his palace at Shandu, while his son Gengis had also retired to the place usually visited by him at that season. The charge of the city was then intrusted to Achmac, who communicated all affairs that occurred during his master's absence, and received the necessary instructions. Vanku and Chenku, having thus consulted together, imparted the design to some leading persons among the Kataians, and also to their friends in various other cities. They formed an agreement, that on a certain day, immediately on perceiving a signal made by fire, they should rise and put to death all persons wearing beards. This distinction was made because they themselves naturally wanted this appendage, which characterized the Tartars, the Saracens, and the Christians. The grand khan, having acquired the sovereignty of Kataia, not by any legitimate right, but solely by force of arms, placed no confidence in the natives, and therefore intrusted all the provincial governments to Tartars, Saracens, Christians, and other foreigners belonging to his household. From this cause his reign was universally detested by the people, who found themselves treated as slaves by the Tartars, and still worse by the Saracens.

Vanku and Chenku, having thus arranged their plans, succeeded at night in entering the palace; when the former placed himself on one of the royal seats, made the apartment be lighted up, and sent a messenger to Achmac, then residing in the old city. He professed to come from Gengis, the emperor's son, who, he said, had unexpectedly arrived, and required his immediate attendance. The viceroy was much surprised by this intelligence; but, as he stood in awe of the prince, he presently obeyed. On passing the gate of the new city, he met the Tartar officer named Kogatai, who commanded the guard of 12,000 men, and who asked him whither he was going at that late hour. He stated his intention of waiting upon Gengis, whose arrival had just been announced to him. "It is very surprising," said the officer,

"how he should have come so secretly that I was not apprized of it, so as to send a party of guards to attend him." The two Kataians, meantime, felt confident, that if they could succeed in despatching Achmac, they had nothing farther to fear. On entering the palace, and seeing so many lights blazing, he prostrated himself before Vanku, whom he supposed to be the prince, when Chenku, who held a sword ready in his hand, severed his head from his body. Kogatai had stopped at the door; but, seeing this catastrophe, he exclaimed that treason was at work, and presently discharged an arrow, which slew Vanku as he sat upon the throne. He then caused his men to seize the other, and despatched an order to the city to kill every one who should be found abroad. The Kataians, however, seeing the conspiracy discovered, one of their chiefs killed, and the survivor a prisoner, remained in their houses, and could not make the concerted signals to the other towns. Kogatai lost no time in sending messengers with a particular relation of these events to the khan, who, in reply, ordered him diligently to investigate the conspiracy, and to punish according to the degree of their guilt those found implicated in it. Next day, after receiving this command, he examined all the Kataians, and inflicted the punishment of death on the ringleaders. Other cities known to have participated in the guilt suffered similar inflictions.

When his majesty returned to Kambalu, he inquired eagerly into the cause of this disturbance, and learned that the infamous Achmac and seven of his sons (the others being less culpable) had committed several enormities. He gave orders that the treasure, which he had accumulated to an incredible amount, should be removed from his place of residence to the new city, where it was lodged in his own treasury. He directed even that his corpse should be disinterred, and thrown into the street, where the dogs might tear it in pieces. The sons, who had pursued the same criminal course with their father, were ordered to be flayed alive. Considering also the principles of the accursed sect of the

Saracens, which allow them to indulge in the commission of every crime, and even to murder those who differ from them on points of belief, whence even the detestable Achmac and his sons might have imagined themselves guiltless, he regarded the whole body with contempt and abomination. Summoning them to his presence, he forbade the continuance of many practices enjoined in their law, ordering that in future their marriages should be arranged according to the Tartar custom; and that, in killing animals for food, instead of cutting their throats, they should rip open the stomach. Marco Polo was on the spot when these events took place.*

XIV.—Guards of the Great Khan.

When the great khan holds a court, he is guarded, on account of his excellency and honour, by 12,000 horsemen, who are called *quiesitan*, that is, faithful servants of their lord; and this he does not from fear but regard to his high dignity. Over these 12,000 are four captains, so that each commands 3000; and they keep guard in turn three days and three nights, eating and drinking at the expense of the prince. Then they

* This is the most important of the chapters found exclusively in Ramusio. Mr Marsden proves the correctness of the main facts by a quotation from De Guignes, who relates them with such variations as prove him to have drawn from an independent Oriental source. Count Boni has also found a similar account in the Chinese history translated by Mailla. The minister is there called Achma; but the real name is the common Turkish one of Achmed or Achmet. Although this chapter is evidently written by one possessing information on Chinese affairs, yet the complete contrast between the tone in which the khan is mentioned here and in every other place, makes it impossible to believe that it could have come from the same quarter. The peculiar bitterness with which the Saracens are mentioned seems to confirm the suggestion formerly made that the writer was a churchman. It may easily be supposed that the event might give Kublai a prejudice against the sect, yet we can scarcely believe that he showed it by such childish enactments as those here stated. De Guignes represents him as having ordered the goods of the guilty minister to be given up to plunder. Mr Marsden urges, with some reason, that the statement in the text, of his having taken them to himself, is the more probable one.

go away, and another party comes; and so they proceed throughout the whole year.

XV.—The Magnificence of his Festivals.

When the khan wishes to celebrate a splendid festival, the tables are so arranged that his is much higher than the others, and he sits on the north, with his face toward the south. His first wife is seated beside him on the left, while, on the right, are his sons and nephews, and all those of imperial lineage, who are so stationed that their head is on a level with the feet of the monarch. The barons sit still lower; while the ladies, daughters, and female relations of the khan are placed beneath the queen on the left side, and under them all the wives of the barons; every class knows the spot where they ought to sit. The tables are so arranged that the monarch can see all the company, who are very numerous; and outside of that hall there eat more than 40,000 persons, who have come with presents or remarkable objects from foreign parts, and attend on the days when he holds a court or celebrates a marriage. In the midst of this hall is a very large vessel of fine gold, containing wine, and on each side two smaller ones, whence the liquor is poured out into flagons, each containing fully enough for eight men; and one of these is placed between every two guests, who have besides separate cups of gold to drink out of.* This supply of plate is of very great value, and indeed the khan has so many vessels of gold and silver that none without seeing could possibly believe it.

At each door of the great hall, or of any part of the palace occupied by his majesty, stand two officers of gigantic height, holding in their hands staves, to prevent persons who enter from touching the threshold. If any one chances to commit this offence, they take from him

* In Ramusio it is said that the large vessel with wine is equal to a tun, and that, beside it, there are two equal to hogsheads filled with milk. This last article is not mentioned in any early edition.

his garment, which he must redeem by a payment, or if they spare his dress, inflict at least a number of blows fixed by authority. As strangers may not be aware of this prohibition, officers are appointed to warn them of it at the time of introduction. Since, however, some of the company, on leaving the hall, may be so affected with liquor as to be unable to guard against the accident, it is not then severely punished. Those who serve the khan at table are great barons, who hold their mouths carefully wrapped in rich towels of silk and gold, that their breath may not blow upon the dishes. When he begins to drink, all the instruments, which are very numerous, are sounded, and while the cup is in his hand, the barons and others present fall on their knees, and make signs of great humility ; this is done every time he drinks, or when new viands are brought in. These I shall not attempt to recount, since any one may believe that he will have the greatest variety of beasts and birds, wild and domestic, and of fishes in their season, and in the greatest abundance, prepared most delicately in various modes suitable to his magnificence and dignity. Every baron or knight brings his wife, and she sits at table along with the other ladies. When the great sire has eaten, and the tables are removed, a number of jesters, players, and other witty persons perform various pieces, exciting much mirth and pleasure among the company, who then all depart and go to their homes.*

XVI.—Great Festival at the King's Birthday.

The Tartars celebrate a festival on the day of their

* The reader may compare this festival with those celebrated by the khans in the wilds of Tartary. See pages 70, 72, 79. The mode of arranging the company continues the same. The number and variety of dishes formed a natural improvement in this more plentiful region. The performance of the jesters and actors is a Chinese amusement, of which no mention is made in that rude country. It is only in one sentence from Ramusio that allusion is made to that tendency to intoxication which was there so recklessly indulged, and was not probably here altogether unusual.

nativity. The birthday of the khan is on the 28th September, and is the greatest of all, except that at the beginning of the year. On this occasion he clothes himself in robes of beaten gold, and his twelve barons and 12,000 soldiers wear like him dresses of a uniform colour and shape; not that they are so costly, but similarly made of silk, gilded, and bound by a cincture of gold. Many have these robes adorned with precious stones and pearls, so as to be worth 10,000 golden bezants. The great khan, twelve times in the year, presents to those barons and knights robes of the same colour with his own; and this is what no lord in the world can do. On the day of his nativity, all the Tartars from every province of the world, who hold lands under him, celebrate a festival, and bring presents suited to their station. The same is done by every individual who asks from him any favour or office. He has twelve barons who bestow commands on such persons as they think proper. On that day, the Christians, Saracens, and all the races of men who are subject to him, make prayers to their gods that they will preserve, and grant him a long, healthy, and happy life. I will tell you no more of this festival, but of another which they celebrate at the beginning of the year, called the White Feast.

XVII.—Festival of the New Year.

The Tartars begin their year in February,* when the khan and his people celebrate a feast, where all, both men and women, are clothed in white robes. They consider these as signifying joy and good fortune, and that hence all prosperity will happen to them throughout the year. On that day, all who hold land or any dominion under him, make the most magnificent presents in their power, consisting of gold, silver, pearls, precious stones, and rich white cloths; so that,

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* It appears by the Tables of Ulugh Beig that the Chinese really begin their year in February, on the day when the sun reaches the middle point of Aquarius. Mr Marsden, p. 331, confirms this by other authorities.

during the whole year, he may have abundance of treasures, and of the means of enjoying himself. They present also more than 5000 camels, with about 100,000 beautiful white horses. On that day, too, he is gratified with at least 5000 elephants covered with cloths of silk and gold, finely wrought with figures of beasts and birds, and each having on his back a box filled with vessels of gold and silver, and other things necessary for the feast. They all pass before the great khan, and form the most brilliant spectacle ever seen in this world. In the morning of that festal day, before the tables are spread, the kings, generals, counts, astrologers, physicians, falconers, and many other officers and rulers, repair to the hall of the sovereign, and those who are not admitted remain without the palace in a place where the monarch can fully see them. They are in the following order:—Foremost, his sons, nephews, and others of his lineage, then kings, generals, and others according to their rank. As soon as each has taken his place, a great prelate rises and says, with a loud voice, "incline and adore;" and presently all bend down, strike their foreheads on the earth, and make prayers to their master, adoring him as a god.* This they do four times, and then go to an altar, on which is written the name of the great khan. Then, out of a beautiful box, they pour incense on that table in reverence of him, and return to their place; they next make those rich and valuable presents which I have described. When all these things have been done, and the prince has seen them all, the tables are placed, and they sit down, when the feast is ordered and celebrated in the manner already explained. Now that I have described to you the joy of the White Feast, I will tell you of a most noble thing done by this monarch; for he has ordered vestments to be bestowed upon the barons there present.

* We find here described that servile homage, called *kotou*, the existence of which is too well known to require any confirmation.

XVIII.—Robes bestowed by the Great Khan.

He has twelve barons, who are called *quiesitan*, or the faithful men of the supreme lord. He gives to each thirteen vestments, differing in colour, and adorned with precious stones, pearls, and other great and most valuable articles; also a golden girdle, and sandals worked with threads of silver, so that each, in these several dresses, appears like a king; and there is a regulation what dress ought to be worn at each of the feasts. The monarch has thirteen robes of the same colour with those of his barons, but more costly.* And now I will relate a most wonderful thing, namely, that a large lion is led into his presence, which, as soon as it sees him, drops down, and makes a sign of deep humility, owning him for its lord, and moving about without any chain. Now you shall hear of the great huntings made by this powerful ruler.

XIX.—Profusion of Game supplied to his Court.

He resides in the city of Cathay, that is Kambalu, three months, December, January, and February, and has commanded that, for forty days' journey round, all the people should engage in hunting and falconry. The various lords of nations and lands are ordered to bring to him large beasts, stags, boars, wild-goats, and other animals. Those at the distance of thirty days' journey send the bodies preserved with the entrails taken out, while those at forty send only the skins, which are employed as furniture for his army.

XX.—Leopards and other wild Animals kept for Hunting.

Now let us tell of the beasts which his majesty keeps for hunting. Among these are leopards and lynxes, or stag-wolves, well fitted for that purpose. He

* The bestowal of robes upon courtiers, however foreign to our customs, is shown by Mr Marsden to be a usual bounty at oriental courts.

has also many lions larger than those of Babylon, of a beautiful hair and colour, striped lengthways, black, red, and white, and trained to catch stags, wild-oxen, hogs, wild-goats, and asses; and it is delightful to see one of these chases, where the hunters go out, carrying the lion in a cage, and with him a small dog.* They have likewise abundance of eagles, with which they capture hares, foxes, and even wolves; those which are trained to catch these last are very large, and of great weight, so that no wolf can escape them.

XXI.—His numerous Dogs and splendid Hunting Expeditions.

Now let us speak of the dogs kept by this monarch. He has two barons who are brothers, named Bayam and Migam; they are called *cinuci*, that is, the keepers of mastiff dogs, and each commands a party of 10,000 men, one clothed in vermilion, and the other in blue; whenever they go out with the monarch they are dressed in these vestments. In each party there are 2000 of the men, who guide respectively one, two, or more large mastiffs, making altogether a vast multitude. When his majesty goes to hunt, these two brothers attend him on opposite sides, each with 10,000 men and 5000 dogs; and they hunt thus a day's journey distant from each other, and never pursue any animal which is not captured. It is indeed beautiful to see the speed of these dogs

* The lion here and elsewhere described by our author is manifestly the tiger. See Mr Wilson's remarks in Account of China, Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. iii. p. 393. Mr Marsden (p. 339) observes, that the Asiatics generally make little distinction between the two species. The tiger, I imagine, was unknown in Europe when Marco left it, and seeing it the only wild animal similar in size and strength, he might readily view it as merely a variety of the lion. Mr Marsden (p. 338) mentions, that the Moguls of Hindostan employ small leopards for hunting. There is no doubt, especially after what we have seen done by Mr V. Amburgh, that if no pains are spared, as would be the case here, the strongest and fiercest animals may be brought under complete control. The lion itself, in Bornou, is tamed into a domestic favourite; for which purpose the sultan sent a present of one to Major Denham, who, wisely I think, declined the compliment.

and the hunters, for when the prince goes out with his barons, boars and other animals are running on every side, and the dogs pursuing.

XXII.—Falconry and the Chase after Birds.

When the monarch has remained in Kambalu these three months, he departs and goes southward* to the ocean two days' journey distant. He leads with him 10,000 falconers, conveying full 5000 gerfalcons, peregrine falcons in abundance, and also many vultures; but do not imagine that these are all kept in one place; there are 200 here, 300 there, and so on. The birds caught are mostly presented to the great sire, and when he goes to hunt with his gerfalcons, vultures, and falcons, 10,000 men are ranged, two together, so as to enclose much ground; these are called *toscaor*, meaning in our language men who remain on the watch, and each has a call and a hood to invite the birds. And when any

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* As the direction here assigned bears upon what Mr Marsden considers the most serious objection to our traveller's authenticity, a few observations may be proper. The two Paris editions, the Crusca, and the earliest English one (by Frampton), all make it *south*. The Latin ones by Pipino and Gryneus give no direction. Ramusio alone has *Greco*, which Mr M. translates north-east; but the term, meaning a wind blowing from Greece into Italy, could imply only a small declination northwards. Besides, the station is said to be only two days' journey from Pe-king, which Mr Marsden insists must be a gross error; "for the whole context shows that he is speaking of one of the emperor's distant progresses through the Mantchoo country." I cannot discover any expression that involves such a meaning. It seems to have become fixed in the mind of the learned author, that because the present emperors have their summer residence in that quarter, Kublai must have had his also. He forgets that the former circumstance is owing to their being of Mantchoo origin, and consequently attached to that region, while the Mongol dynasty had not the slightest tie to it. There appears, then, no ground to suppose that the station here described was beyond the limits of China, or that Marco, in visiting it, must have crossed or seen the great wall. Since writing the above, I have had the satisfaction to find my opinion coincide with the conclusion of Count Boni (Il Millione, vol. ii. p. 193), who, moreover, judiciously observes, how very unsuitable the beginning of March would have been for an excursion into the frozen mountains of Tartary.

falconer, by order of his majesty, sends forth a falcon, he has no need to follow it, because wherever it may go, it is watched by the men ranged in double order, who can either catch it again, or if necessary afford it succour. Each of the birds belonging to the sovereign and barons has a tablet of silver on its feet, with its name and that of the owner inscribed, so that wherever caught, it can be returned to him. If he is unknown, the animal must be carried to a chief named *bulangazi*, or guardian of things that are lost, who stands with his flag on an elevated spot, and all who have missed any thing go to him and recover it. Whoever finds a horse, a bird, a sword, or any thing else, and does not carry it to the owner or to this officer, is treated as a robber; thus scarcely any thing is ever lost. When the monarch goes upon these excursions, he has with him four elephants, and a chamber prepared, covered within with cloth of beaten gold, and outwardly with lions' skins, where he keeps twelve of his very best gerfalcons, with twelve barons to amuse him by their society. As the falconers ride by, they call, " Sire, the birds are passing," when he throws open the chamber, and seeing the object, selects the gerfalcons that please him, and sends them forth against the birds, few of which ever escape. Lying on his couch, he can view and enjoy the chase. Thus, I think, there is not, and never will be, any lord in the world, who has or can have so much diversion as the great khan.

XXIII.—Magnificent Tents of the Great Khan.

When this mighty monarch comes to one of his places, named Chaccia, he causes his tents to be pitched, with those of his sons and barons. These exceed 10,000 in number, and are very beautiful and rich. That in which he keeps his court is so large that 1000 knights can dwell in it; this is for his nobles and other attendants. He himself resides in another, looking westward, where those to whom he wishes to speak are introduced; while there is an interior chamber in which

he sleeps. The two halls have each three fine columns of aromatic wood, and are covered outwardly with beautiful lions' hides, all striped with black, white, and vermilion, so that water cannot enter. The inside is lined with skins of ermine and zibelline, of the highest value, especially the latter, of which a robe suitable for a man would be worth 2000 golden bezants, while a common one would be worth 1000. The Tartars call them royal skins, and they are as large as those of a fawn; the whole hall is covered with them, worked most delicately in intaglio. These apartments contain furniture of such value that a little king could not purchase them. Around are large tents for his ladies, and for his gerfalcons and other beasts and birds; for he brings all his train, doctors, astronomers, hunters, and other officials, so that the whole appears a large and crowded city. He remains there till the feast of the Resurrection, during which time he does nothing but chase cranes, swans, and other birds, when those who catch any bring them to him, and thus the sport is beyond what any one can describe. No baron, nor lord, nor husbandman, can keep a dog or falcon for twenty days' journey round his residence; beyond that distance they may do what they please. No person, too, of whatever condition, must, from March to October, take any game, but leave them to multiply their kind; so that hares and stags become so fearless as frequently to come up to men, yet are not taken. The great khan then returns to the city of Kambalu by the same road, hawking and sporting.

XXIV.—Hunting Palace at Shandu in Tartary.*

At Shandu in Tartary, near the western frontier of China, he has built a very large palace of marble

* This and the following chapter are usually inserted in a different place, at the close of the journey through Central Asia. It appeared to us that it would be interesting to introduce them here, and thus complete the account of Kublai's huntings, and his mode of spending the year. The places will be afterwards noticed in the itinerary order, and an attempt made to fix their position.

and other valuable stones. The halls are gilded all over and wonderfully beautiful, and a space sixteen miles in circuit is surrounded by a wall, within which are fountains, rivers, and meadows. Here he finds stags, deer, and wild-goats to give for food to the falcons and gerfalcons, which he keeps in cages, and goes out once a-week to sport with them. Frequently he rides through that enclosure, having a leopard on the crupper of his horse, which, whenever he is inclined, he lets go, and it catches a stag, deer, or wild-goat, which is given to the gerfalcons in the cage. In this park, too, the monarch has a large palace framed of cane, the interior gilded all over, having pictures of beasts and birds most skilfully worked on it. The roof is of the same material, and so richly varnished that no water can penetrate. I assure you these canes are more than three palms thick, and from ten to fifteen paces long. They are cut lengthways, from one knot to the other, and then arranged so as to form the roof. The whole structure is so disposed that the khan, when he pleases, can order it to be taken down, for it is supported by more than 200 cords of silk. His majesty remains there three months of the year, June, July, and August, the situation being cool and agreeable; and during this period his palace of cane is set up, while all the rest of the year it is down. On the 28th of August, he departs thence, and for the following purpose:—There are a race of mares white as snow, with no mixture of any other colour, and in number 10,000, whose milk must not be drunk by any one who is not of imperial lineage. Only one other race of men can drink it, called Boriat, because they gained a victory for Gengis Khan. When one of these white animals is passing, the Tartars pay respect to it as to a great lord, standing by to make way for it. The astrologers and idolaters, too, have told the khan, that on the 28th August this milk must be sprinkled through the air, and over the earth, that the spirits may drink plentifully, and may preserve all that belong to him, men, women, beasts, birds, and other things. But

there is a wonderful circumstance that I had forgotten. When the monarch remained in that palace, and there came on rain, fog, or any bad weather, he had skilful astronomers and enchanters, who made these mischiefs fly away from his palace, so that none of them could approach it. These wise men are called Tebet and Quesmur;* they are idolaters, and more skilful in diabolical arts and enchantments than any other generation; and though they do it by the art of the devil, they make other men believe that it is through their great sanctity and by the power of God.† I must tell you, too, another of their customs, that when any man is judged and condemned to death by his lord, they cook and eat him, but not when he dies a natural death.‡ I will tell you, too, a great wonder which these *baksi* do by their enchantments. When the monarch sits at table in his hall of state, and the cups are ten paces distant, full of wine, milk, and other beverages, they cause them, by their magical spells, to rise from the pavement and place themselves before the prince, without any one touching them; this is done in the presence of 10,000 men; and the fact is real and true, without any lie.§

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* Meaning that they come from the countries of Thibet and Cashmere. This clearly marks the disciples of Boodh, who have their chief seat in the former region.

† Ramusio has the following passage:—"They exhibit themselves in a filthy and indecorous manner, regardless of their character and the respect due to others. They suffer their faces to remain unwashed, and their hair uncombed, living in a state altogether squalid." Mr Marsden admits that this passage applies to the Indian yogis, and in no degree to the priests of Boodh. It seems a blundering interpolation by one who had some knowledge, but confused and indistinct, of Eastern affairs.

‡ It is difficult to imagine what can have induced the author to make this extraordinary statement. Probably the enmity of a hostile sect may have led them to impute this enormity to their adversaries.

§ The advanced state which the mechanical arts have long attained in China might easily enable the priests to produce this deception. A connexion with some court grandees might permit them to introduce the requisite machinery; for one can scarcely think with Mr Marsden that the khan was privy to it. If there be any truth at all in the conversation he is made to hold, pp. 112, 113, he certainly was not.

These baksi, when the festivals of their idols come round, go to his majesty and say, "Great sire, you know the feast of such an idol approaches, and are aware that he can cause bad weather and much mischief to your cattle and grain. We pray, therefore, that you will give us all the sheep with black heads, also incense, aloe-wood, and such and such other things." This they tell to the barons, who repeat it to the khan, and he gives what they demand. Then they go to the image and raise in his presence a delicious fragrance, with incense and spices, cook the flesh, and place it with bread before him. Thus every god has his day of commemoration in the same manner as our saints. They have also extensive abbeys and monasteries, one of which here resembles a little city, containing upwards of 2000 monks, who are clothed in a particular dress, which is handsomer than that of other men. They worship their idols by the grandest feasts, songs, and lights that ever were seen. And I may tell you that many of these baksi, according to their order, may take wives, do so, and have a number of children. Yet there is another kind of religious men called *sensi*, who observe strict abstinence; they eat nothing but the husks of corn boiled in warm water, fast often in the course of the year, have many large idols, and sometimes adore fire. Their observances differ from those of every other sect; they would not take a wife for any thing in the world. They shave the head and beard, wear black and blue dresses of coarse canvass, sleep upon mats, and lead the hardest life of any men on earth. Their monasteries and their idols all bear the names of women.*

XXV.—Palace at Cianganor.

At Cianganor, too, three days' journey distant, the khan has a large palace, where he is fond of residing, because there are many lakes and rivers, as well as fine plains, abounding in cranes, pheasants, part-

* The extensive monasteries here described are common in Tangut, upon which this residence bordered. Mr Marsden, pp. 260, 261, has shown that the observances here described are usually practised by the votaries of Fo.

ridges, and other birds. Here, therefore, he has delightful hawking, and abundant exercise for his falcons and gerfalcons. There are five kinds of cranes which I must describe. The first are black like crows, and very large. The second are white, and very beautiful, for all the feathers are full of round eyes, like those of the peacock, and glitter like gold. The head is white, black, and red all round, and they are larger than any of the others. The third species resemble ours. The fourth are small, and have in their ears very magnificent red and black feathers. The fifth are all gray, with handsome red and black heads, and are very large. Near this city is a valley where the khan has ordered the erection of various small houses, in which are kept flocks of partridges, and he employs a number of men to guard these birds, so that they are in abundance; and whenever he comes into this palace, he finds as many as he desires.

XXVI.—Paper Money—Immense Wealth of the Great Khan.

With regard to the money of Kambalu, the great khan may be called a perfect alchymist, for he makes it himself. He orders people to collect the bark of a certain tree, whose leaves are eaten by the worms that spin silk. The thin rind between the bark and the interior wood is taken, and from it cards are formed like those of paper, all black. He then causes them to be cut into pieces, and each is declared worth respectively half a livre, a whole one, a silver grosso of Venice, and so on to the value of ten bezants. All these cards are stamped with his seal, and so many are fabricated, that they would buy all the treasuries in the world. He makes all his payments in them, and circulates them through the kingdoms and provinces over which he holds dominion; and none dares to refuse them under pain of death. All the nations under his sway receive and pay this money for their merchandise, gold, silver, precious stones, and whatever they transport, buy, or sell. The merchants often bring to him goods worth 400,000 bezants, and he pays them all in these cards, which they willingly accept,

because they can make purchases with them throughout the whole empire. He frequently commands those who have gold, silver, cloths of silk and gold, or other precious commodities, to bring them to him. Then he calls twelve men skilful in these matters, and commands them to look at the articles, and fix their price. Whatever they name is paid in these cards, which the merchant cordially receives. In this manner the great sire possesses all the gold, silver, pearls, and precious stones in his dominions. When any of the cards are torn or spoiled, the owner carries them to the place whence they were issued, and receives fresh ones, with a deduction of 3 per cent. If a man wishes gold or silver to make plate, girdles, or other ornaments, he goes to the office, carrying a sufficient number of cards, and gives them in payment for the quantity which he requires.* This is the reason why the khan has more treasure than any other lord in the world; nay, all the princes in the world together have not an equal amount.

XXVII.—The Twelve Governors of Provinces and their Duty.

He has appointed twelve very great barons, who hold command over all things in the thirty-four provinces. They reside in a palace within the city of Kambalu, large and beautiful, containing many halls and apartments; and for every province there is an agent and a number of writers or notaries, having each a house to

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* The use of paper money at this period is fully confirmed by Chinese history (Marsden, pp. 356, 357). It is said to have been first introduced by Hong-vou, of the dynasty which preceded the Mongol conquest, and to have been adopted by Okkoday, the immediate successor of Gengis. Kublai seems to have carried it to a greater extent than any of his predecessors; and the Yuen dynasty, who expelled the Tartars, attempted to continue the practice; but it has been long since disused, and only detached remnants are preserved as curiosities, or as amulets.—Account of China, Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. ii. p. 247. Count Boni mentions, that the *morus papyrifera* (paper-bearing mulberry) is a peculiar species lately introduced into Italy, though used only for common purposes, and no trial, he regrets, has yet been made of producing from it that article.—Il Millione, i. 89.

himself. They manage all the provincial affairs according to the will and pleasure of the twelve barons. The latter have power to appoint the lords of the provinces above mentioned ; and having chosen the one whom they judge best qualified, they name him to the great khan, who confirms him, and bestows a golden tablet corresponding to his command. These twelve barons are called in the Tartar language *scieng*, that is, the greater officers of state. They order the army to go where and in what numbers they please, but all according to the commands of the great sire ; and they do every other thing necessary for the provinces. The palace in which they dwell is called *scien*, and is the largest in all the court ; they have the power of doing much good to any one whom they favour.

XXVIII.—The Couriers of the Great Khan and their Stations.

I must now inform you, that from the city of Kambalu, many messengers are sent to divers provinces, and on all the roads they find, at every twenty-five miles, a post called *jamb*, where the imperial envoys are received. At each is a large edifice, containing a bed covered with silk, and every thing useful and convenient for a traveller ; so that if a king were to come, he would be well accommodated. Here, too, they find full 400 horses whom the prince has ordered to be always in waiting to convey them when sent into any quarter, along the principal roads. When they have to go through any district where there is no habitation, the monarch has caused such edifices to be reared at the distance of thirty-five or at most forty miles ; thus they go through all the provinces, finding every where inns and horses for their reception. This is the greatest establishment that ever was kept by any king or emperor in the world ; for at those places there are maintained more than 200,000 horses.* Also the edifices, furnished and

* Here follows a long passage (exclusively in Ramusio) accounting for the great population of the country ; but it bears so apocryphal a character, asserting that every man has from six to ten wives, and owns six or eight horses, that, in the

prepared in the manner now described, amount to more than 10,000.* Moreover, in the intervals between these stations, at every three miles, are erected villages of about forty houses, inhabited by foot-runners, also employed on these despatches. They wear a large girdle, set round with bells, which are heard at a great distance. When one of them receives a letter or packet, he runs full speed to the next village, where his approach being announced by the bells, another is ready to start and proceed to the next, and so on. By these pedestrian messengers the khan receives news in one day and night from places distant ten days' journey; in two, from those distant twenty; and in ten, from those distant a hundred.† From them he exacts no tribute, but gives them horses and many other things. When his messengers go on horseback to carry intelligence into the provinces or bring tidings from distant parts, and, more especially, respecting any district that has rebelled, they ride in one day and night 200, 250, or even 300 miles;

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absence of any early authority, I have determined to reject it. It mentions, however, correctly, the great care with which the land is cultivated.

* Government posts for the conveyance of intelligence and messengers have been long and generally employed by Asiatic monarchs. Count Boni even finds them mentioned in the Cyropædia of Xenophon. We have seen Carpini and Rubruquis thus conveyed across the whole breadth of Tartary. I cannot but think, however, that the numbers here, as in other instances, are much exaggerated. If we suppose 20,000 miles of road thus provided, the stages would still be short of 1000. I doubt, however, if we can adopt Mr Marsden's conjecture of a cipher too much; for in early MSS. the numerals are always Roman. It is also absurd to suppose such a number of horses kept in waiting at every stage; but the author might be misled by the circumstance, that any large mission passing to or from court is supplied with the number wanted by impressment among the farmers. The word *jamb* seems to be the Persian *yam* or *iam*.

† It seems difficult to understand why these foot-runners should have been employed on the same roads with the horse-couriers, who would surely travel more quickly. I cannot but suspect that the former were confined to those barren tracts which did not afford the requisite forage. Mr Marsden quotes Bell of Antermony for the modern practice; his journey lay through the great desert.

and when there are two, they receive two good horses, bind themselves round the head and body, and gallop full speed from one station to the next at twenty-five miles' distance, where they find two others fresh and ready harnessed, on which they proceed with the same rapidity. They stop not for an instant day nor night, and are thus enabled to bring news in so short a period. Now, I will tell you the great bounty which the monarch bestows twice in the year.

XXIX.—The Care and Bounty of the Monarch towards his Subjects.

He sends his messengers through all his kingdoms and provinces, to know if any of his subjects have had their crops injured through bad weather or any other disaster; and if such injury has happened, he does not exact from them any tribute for that season or year; nay, he gives them corn out of his own stores to subsist upon, and to sow their fields. This he does in summer; in winter he inquires if there has been a mortality among the cattle, and in that case grants similar exemption and aid. When there is a great abundance of grain, he causes magazines to be formed, to contain wheat, rice, millet, or barley, and care to be taken that it be not lost or spoiled; then when a scarcity occurs, this grain is drawn forth, and sold for a third or fourth of the current price.* Thus there cannot be any severe famine; for he does it through all his dominions; he bestows also great charity on many poor families in Kambalu; and when he hears of individuals who have not food to eat, he causes grain to be given to them. Bread is not refused at the court throughout the whole year to any who come to beg for it; and on this account he is adored as a god by his people. His majesty pro-

* The formation of public granaries to be opened in times of scarcity is common. The same may be said of the remission of taxes in unfavourable seasons. Besides motives of humanity, these measures are prompted by the dread of insurrection, which is often excited in this empire by intervals of severe dearth.—Marsden, p. 371.

vides them also with raiment out of his tithes of wool, silk, and hemp. These materials he causes to be woven into different sorts of cloth, in a house erected for that purpose, where every artisan is obliged to work one day in the week for his service. Garments made of the stuffs thus manufactured are given to destitute families for their winter and summer dresses. A dress is also prepared for his armies; and in every city a quantity of woollen cloth is woven, being defrayed from the tithes there levied. It must be observed, that the Tartars, according to their original customs, when they had not yet adopted the religion of the idolaters, never bestowed alms; but when applied to by any necessitous person, repelled him with reproachful expressions, saying,—begone with your complaints of a bad season, God has sent it to you, and had he loved you, as he evidently loves me, you would have similarly prospered. But since some of the wise men among the idolaters, especially the baksi, have represented to his majesty, that to provide for the poor is a good work and highly grateful to their deities, he has bestowed charity in the manner now described, so that, at his court, none are denied food who come to ask for it.* He has also so arranged that in all the highways by which messengers, merchants, and other persons travel, trees are planted at short distances on both sides of the road, and are so tall that they can be seen from a great distance. They serve thus both to show the way and afford a grateful shade. This is done whenever the nature of the soil admits of plantation; but when the route lies through sandy deserts or over rocky mountains, he has ordered stones to be set up, or columns erected, to guide the traveller. Officers of rank are appointed, whose duty it is to take care that these matters be properly arranged, and the roads kept constantly in good order. Besides other motives, the

* The last three sentences are in Ramusio alone, and from their tendency to depreciate the khan, I cannot help suspecting them to be the production of the same pen which narrated the rebellion of Achmac.

great khan is influenced by the declaration of his soothsayers and astrologers, that those who plant trees receive long life as their reward.

XXX.—Liquor used for Wine in Cathay.

You must know that the greater part of the people of Cathay drink a wine made of rice and many good spices, and prepare it in such a way that it is more agreeable to drink than any other liquid. It is clear and beautiful, and it makes a man drunk sooner than any other wine, for it is extremely hot.*

XXXI.—Stones which are burnt instead of Wood.

It may be observed, also, that throughout the whole province of Cathay, there are a kind of black stones cut from the mountains in veins, which burn like logs. They maintain the fire better than wood. If you put them on in the evening, they will preserve it the whole night, and will be found burning in the morning. Throughout the whole of Cathay this fuel is used.† They have also wood indeed; but the stones are much less expensive.

XXXII.—The Astrologers of Kambalu—the Tartar Computation of Time.

The city of Kambalu contains, inclusive of Christians, Saracens, and Kataians, about 5000 astrologers and soothsayers, whom the emperor provides with food and clothing, as he does the poor families; and they

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* It is well known that the Chinese distil a spirit from rice, of which they drink plentifully. Yet, from the mention of spices, which they do not mix with it, I incline strongly to believe that tea entered partly into our author's idea, and that, being little familiar with Chinese customs, he confounded the two together.

† This is evidently coal, which abounds in China, but was then unknown in the part of Europe from which the traveller came. If I remember right, Æneas Sylvius, when relating his journey in Scotland, uses the very same expression, describing the weekly distribution among the poor of stones for the purpose of fuel.

are constantly practising their art. They have astrolabes, on which are delineated the planetary signs, the hours of passing the meridian, and their successive aspects during the whole year. The astrologers of each separate sect annually examine their respective tables, to ascertain thence the course of the heavenly bodies, and their relative positions for every lunation. From the paths and configurations of the planets in the several signs, they foretell the state of the weather and the peculiar phenomena which are to occur in each month. In one, for instance, there will be thunder and storms; in another earthquakes; in a third violent lightning and rain; in a fourth pestilence, mortality, war, discord, conspiracy. What they find in their astrolabes they predict, adding, however, that God may at his pleasure do either more or less than they have announced.

Their annual prophecies are written on small squares called *takuini*, which are sold at a moderate price to all persons anxious to search into futurity. Those whose announcements prove more generally correct are accounted the most perfect masters of their art, and consequently held in the highest honour. When any one projects a great work, a long journey for commercial purposes, or any other undertaking, the probable success of which he is desirous to learn, he goes to one of these astrologers, informs him of the time at which he intends to set out, and inquires what aspect the heavens then exhibit. The astrologer replies, that before he can answer, he must be informed of the year, month, and hour of his nativity, on learning which he examines how the constellation that was then in the ascendant corresponds with the aspect of the celestial bodies at the time of the inquiry. Upon this comparison he founds his prediction as to the favourable or unfavourable issue of the enterprise.

The Tartars compute time by a cycle of twelve years, the first of which they name the lion; the second, the ox; the third, the dragon; the fourth, the dog; and so on till all the twelve have elapsed. When any one,

therefore, is asked the year in which he was born, he answers, it was in that of the lion, on such a day, and at such an hour and minute; all of which had been carefully noted in a book. When the years of the cycle are completed, they begin again with the first, and constantly go over the same round.*

XXXIII.—Religion and Customs of the Tartars (Chinese).

These people are idolaters, and each person has, for the object of worship, a tablet fixed against an elevated part of the wall of his apartment, having a name written on it which denotes the high, heavenly, and mighty God, and this they daily worship, burning incense before it. Raising their hands, and beating their faces three times against the floor, they entreat from him the blessings of sound understanding and bodily health, addressing no other petition. Below, on the floor, they have a statue named *Natigai*, considered as the god of terrestrial objects, or of whatever is produced on the earth. They suppose him to have a wife and children, and worship him in the same manner with incense, lifting their hands, and bending to the ground. They pray to him for good weather, plentiful crops, increase of family, and other such objects. They believe the soul to be so far immortal, that immediately after death it enters another body, and according as a man's actions in this life have been virtuous or wicked, his future state will be progressively more or less fortunate. If he has been poor, yet acted worthily and respectably, he will be born anew, first of a lady, becoming himself a gentleman; then of a woman of rank, becoming a nobleman, and he will continually ascend in the scale of existence till he becomes united with the divinity. On the contrary, if a gentleman's son have acted unworthily,

* The Tartars really have a cycle of twelve years,—marked by names of animals; but there seems to be a mistake in those here given. The most correct list is said to be the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, sheep, monkey, cock, dog, and hog.—Marsden, p. 380.

he will, at his next birth, become a clown, and at length a dog ; descending always to a condition more vile than the former.

They converse courteously, accosting each other with politeness and with countenances expressive of pleasure ; they have a well-bred air, and a manner of eating particularly cleanly. The utmost reverence is shown to parents ; and should any child treat his with disrespect, or neglect to assist them, there is a public tribunal having for its especial object to punish the crime of filial ingratitude. Malefactors, when found guilty, after being apprehended and thrown into prison, are strangled ; but such as remain till the expiry of three years, a time appointed by his majesty for a general release, are set at liberty, having however a brand fixed on one of the cheeks, by which they may be recognised.

The great khan has prohibited all gambling and other species of fraud, to which this people are addicted beyond any other upon earth ; and as a reason for this prohibition, he tells them in his edict, " I subdued you by the power of my sword, and consequently whatever you possess belongs of right to me ; in gambling, therefore, you sport with my property." Yet he does not, by the right thus claimed, take any thing on an arbitrary principle. The orderly and regular manner in which all ranks present themselves before him deserves notice. On approaching within half a mile of his residence, they testify their reverence for his exalted rank by an humble, subdued, and quiet demeanour, so that not the least noise is heard, nor does any one call, or even speak aloud. Every man of rank carries with him, while he continues in the hall of audience, a vessel into which he spits, that he may not soil the floor ; and having done so, he replaces the cover, and makes a bow. They usually take with them handsome buskins of white leather, and on reaching the court, before entering the hall, where they wait to be summoned by his majesty, put them on, giving those worn in walking to the care of the servants. This precaution is taken that they may

not sully the beautiful carpets, curiously wrought with silk and gold, and exhibiting a variety of colours.*

XXXIV.—Marco Polo's Journey—The River Pulisangan and its beautiful Bridge.

I have now to inform you that the great khan having sent Messer Marco as his ambassador into the western provinces, he departed from Kambalu, and travelled in that direction full four months. You shall now hear all that he saw on that journey going and returning. When a man leaves Kambalu and has gone ten miles, he finds a river called Pulisangan, which flows on to the ocean, and is crossed by many merchants with their goods. Over it is a grand stone bridge, which has not its equal in the world; it is 300 paces long and eight broad, and ten horsemen can ride abreast over it. It has twenty-four arches, supported by piers in the water, and is wholly of marble, finely wrought into columns in the manner that I will tell you. At the head of the bridge is a column of marble, above and beneath which are beautifully carved lions of the same material, and about a pace distant is another column, with its lions, and between the two are slabs of gray marble, to secure passengers from falling into the water; and the whole bridge thus formed is the most magnificent object in the world.†

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* These two chapters are found in Ramusio only. They are evidently written by one who had considerable knowledge of China. The prevalence of astrology, and the sanction of it by government, the polite and ceremonious behaviour, the tenets of Fo, and the rage for gambling, are all correctly stated. There is, however, a want of distinctness, particularly in the Tartars and Chinese being confounded together. The title of the second chapter refers to the former, while its contents relate entirely to the latter. On the whole there is nothing in them absolutely to negative their being composed by Marco; yet they appear written in a different tone, and considering their absence in all the early editions, I am strongly inclined to believe, that like others they have been inserted by a different pen.

† Magalhaens describes a similar bridge, and agrees in thinking it perhaps the finest in the world, though he insists that it is not exactly on the site indicated by Marco. It was destroyed

XXXV.—The great City of Geo-gui.

After leaving that bridge a man travels thirty miles westward, finding every where fine trees, villages, and inns, and then comes to a city which is named Geo-gui.* The country is rich in grain, the people are all idolaters; they live by merchandise and the arts, making cloth of gold, as well as silk, and beautiful linen. There are also numerous houses for the reception of strangers. A mile beyond that city are two roads, one leading westward through Cathay, the other southward to the great province of Manji. In riding westward through Cathay full ten days,† you find always handsome cities and castles, abundance of arts and merchandise, fine inns, trees, vines, and a civilized people.

XXXVI.—The Cities of Ta-in-fu and Pi-an-fu.

At the end of this journey is a kingdom named Ta-in-fu,‡ with a capital of the same name. It contains many arts and much merchandise, with a large supply of stores necessary for the imperial army. The district presents numerous vineyards, and being the only part of

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by a flood in 1668, and not replaced by one of equal beauty. The Crusca and Paris Latin make thirty-four arches; but the French and Ramusio (in accordance with Magalhaens) only twenty-four.

* This place, called by Ramusio, Gouza, seems correctly fixed by Marsden (p. 392) at Tso-tcheou, not a city of the first magnitude, but exhibited in D'Anville's map of Pe-che-lee, as the point at which the two great roads here mentioned diverge.

† The distances are all given in journeys. Each of these, according to the best estimate the editor can form, may be reckoned at about fourteen miles in a direct line; but this is not quite uniform. The direction is always given towards a cardinal point, without noticing pretty extensive deviations from it. With these allowances, the itinerary will, it is believed, be found extremely correct.

‡ Tai-yuen-fou, capital of the province of Shan-see. Being the residence of the Tay-ming dynasty, it contains splendid palaces, now in ruin; and it is still very populous. Arms in this less warlike age are no longer fabricated; but the neighbouring mountains abound with iron, and works are carried on in that metal.—Astley's Voyages, vol. iv. p. 52.

Cathay where wine is made, supplies it to the surrounding provinces. It yields also much silk, abounding in the trees on which the worms are fed. A degree of civilisation prevails among all the people of this country, in consequence of their frequent intercourse with the numerous towns which lie very near each other. The merchants are constantly carrying their goods from one to another, as fairs are successively held at each. Five days' journey beyond the ten already mentioned, there is said to be another city still larger and handsomer, named Achbaluch, where are the limits of his majesty's hunting-ground, within which no person must sport, except princes of his family, and others whose names are inscribed on the grand falconer's list; beyond, all persons qualified by their rank have that liberty. The khan scarcely ever follows the chase in this quarter; hence the wild animals, especially hares, multiply to such a degree, as to cause the destruction of all the growing corn. This having come to his knowledge, he was induced to repair thither with his whole court, and prodigious quantities of game were then taken.* Leaving Ta-in-fu, and riding westward full seven days through very fine districts, amid numerous merchants, you find a large town, named Pi-an-fu,† supported by commerce and the silk manufacture.

XXXVII.—The Castle of Caya-fu—Story of its King and Prester John.

Two miles west of Pi-an-fu is a famous castle, named Caya-fu,‡ built anciently by a king named Dor. In this castle is a very beautiful palace, with a great hall, containing portraits, beautifully painted, of all the kings

* This account of Achbaluch and the hunting is exclusively in Ramusio.

† Pin-yang-fou, the second city of Shan-see, not inferior to the capital.—Astley, vol. iv. p. 52.

‡ This place is called variously Chin-cui, Cay-cui, and in Ramusio Chai-cui. Mr Marsden supposes, probably enough, Kiai-tcheou. Count Boni suggests Tai-ping-hien; but we cannot find this place on the Jesuits' or any other map.

who formerly reigned in these provinces. Having mentioned this King Dor, I will tell you a curious story of what passed between him and Prester John. The two sovereigns being at war, Dor was in so strong a situation that the other could not reach him, and was therefore much chagrined; upon which seven of his servants said that they would bring before him his adversary, and if he wished even alive. He said he should be very much obliged to them. Having obtained this permission, they went to the king and presented themselves as strangers desirous to serve him. He gave them an honourable welcome, and they began their duties with the utmost zeal, rendering themselves extremely acceptable. After they had remained two years, he became greatly attached to them, and confided in their love as if they had been his sons. Now hear what these wicked fellows did, and how difficult it is to find defence against a traitor. The king happened to go out on an excursion with a small number of persons, among whom were these seven. When they had passed a river distant from the palace, seeing that the king had not attendants enough to defend him, they laid hands on him, drew their swords, and threatened to kill him unless he instantly went along with them. He was greatly surprised, and said to them,—"What mean you by this, my sons?—what are you saying—whither do you wish me to go?" They replied:—"We wish you to come with us to Prester John, who is our master." When Dor heard this, he almost died with grief, and said,—"ha! my good friends, have I not honoured and treated you as children; why will you betray me into the hands of my enemy? This would be a most wicked and disloyal action." They replied that it must be so. They led him to their sovereign, who rejoiced greatly, and addressed the king in very rough language. He made no reply, not knowing what to answer; upon which, the other set him to keep his cattle, as a mark of disgrace and contempt, and during two years he performed this menial office. After that

time Prester John was appeased, and resolved to spare his captive. He bestowed on him splendid regal vestments, paying him great honour, and saying,—" Now own you were not a man capable of making war against me." The king then replied,—" Sire, I always knew that I was unable to contend with you ; I repent much of my former bad conduct, and promise faithfully that I will always be your friend." Then said the christian prince,—" I will impose upon you no more hardship and grief ; you shall receive favour and honour." Having then supplied him with many horses handsomely equipped, and a numerous attendance, he permitted him to go. Dor then returned to his kingdom, and from that time was a faithful friend and servant of Prester John.*

XXXVIII.—The great River Kara-moran, and the City Ca-cian-fu.

Twenty miles westward from that castle is a river called Kara-moran,† so large and broad that it cannot be crossed by a bridge, and flows on even to the ocean. On its banks are many cities and castles, likewise many merchants and manufactured goods ; and in the country around ginger grows in great abundance. The number of birds is wonderful, so that for a Venetian grosso one can buy three pheasants ; and after travelling three days, you

* This story is of course given by the traveller on hearsay ; yet there seems nothing in it very improbable. With regard to the name Dor (absurdly converted in the Latin versions into Darius), Mr Marsden makes an ingenious and very probable conjecture, that it is applied to the dynasty of Kin, a word in Chinese signifying gold. These princes of Tartar origin had, previous to the Mongol invasion, occupied all this part of Asia. See Account of China, Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. i. p. 100. Prester John, an odd and celebrated name, is understood to apply to Ouang Khan, who at the same period reigned at Karakorum and the adjacent part of Eastern Tartary.—See Introduction to the Missions ; the Travels of Carpini and Rubruquis.

† This term, signifying in China the Black River, is applied here to the great stream of the Hoang-ho, or Yellow River, the second in magnitude of the inland currents which water the empire.

find a noble city named Ca-cian-fu.* The people are idolaters, as likewise those of Cathay. It is a city of great merchandise and many arts. They have abundance of silk, with cloth of gold of all fashions. I will go on to tell you of the capital of the kingdom.

XXXIX.—The City of Quen-gian-fu.

When a man has left the city of Ca-cian-fu, and travelled eight days westward, he finds always cities and castles, merchandise and arts, pleasure-grounds and houses; and the whole country is full of mulberries, producing abundance of silk. The men are idolaters and live by labouring the ground, hunting, and hawking. At the end of the eight days he comes to the noble city of Quen-gian-fu,† capital of a kingdom anciently magnificent and powerful, and which had many noble and valiant kings. At present the crown is held by Mangalu, a son of the great khan. That city is rich in merchandise and manufactures, particularly of implements for the supply of an army; likewise every thing necessary for the subsistence of man. The people are all idolaters. Westward is a beautiful palace of King Mangalu, which I will describe to you. It lies in a great plain watered by a river, as also by many lakes and fountains. A wall five miles in circuit, surrounded with battlements, and well built, encloses this splendid edifice, having halls and chambers adorned with beaten gold. Mangalu exercises his dominion with great justice, and is much beloved

* Mr Marsden is unable to find any large city on this line. Count Boni suggests Hoa-tcheou, which indeed had occurred to me; but it will not accord with the eight days to Si-ngan-fou. I would suggest Tong-tcheou; for there is no reason to suppose that the river may not have been crossed before its bend to the eastward. This site would nearly correspond to all the *data*.

† Ken-zan-fu, *Ramusio*. This is Si-ngan-fou, capital of Shensee, the residence of the three imperial dynasties, Chen, Sin, and Han. A large palace, and walls four leagues in compass, still attest its former grandeur.—(Astley, vol. iv. pp. 53, 54.) Count Boni thinks it Han-tchong fou; but the eight days from Hoa-tcheou would be quite inadequate to reach that city. He forgets, too, that he would then have forty days to spend between it and Tching-tou-fou, a period much too large.

by his people ; the residents in the district enjoy great amusement in hawking and hunting.*

XL.—The Province of Cun-chin.

A man departing from this palace travels three days westward through a very fine plain, always finding villages and castles, with men living by merchandise and rearing silk in great abundance. He then comes to great mountains and valleys belonging to the province of Cun-chin ;† the people are all idolaters, and subsist by agriculture and hunting, having many forests full of various wild animals. Thus a man rides for twenty days through mountains, valleys, and woods, always finding cities, castles, and good inns.

XLI.—The Province of Achalech-Manji.

After this journey, he enters a province named Achalech-Manji, entirely level, and full of cities and castles. The people are all idolaters, and live by merchandise and art, and the province yields such a quantity of ginger, that it is distributed throughout Cathay, to the great profit of the inhabitants. The land also yields rice, wheat, and other grain, and is rich in all productions. The principal country is called Achalech-Manji, which means in our language one of the borders of Manji. This plain lasts for two days, and we then travel twenty through mountains, valleys, and woods, seeing many cities and castles. These people are idolaters, and live on the fruits of the earth and the flesh

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* This agrees with De Guignes' statement, quoted by Marsden, that *Mangkola*, a son of Kublai, was governor of Shen-see, Se-tchuen, and Thibet, and resided at Si-ngan-fou.—Marsden, p. 406.

† This province, called in other editions Kun-kin, Chin-chin, Chym, is considered by Mr Marsden (p. 408) to be Se-tchuen; but the distances compared with the map will show evidently that it is still only the southern part of Shen-see, which bears in fact the rude and mountainous character here ascribed to it (Astley, vol. iv. p. 54). This part of China seems then to have been differently and more minutely subdivided than at present.

of birds and beasts; for there are abundance of lions, bears, wolves, stags, deer, and particularly of those animals which yield the musk.*

XLII.—The Province and City of Sin-din-fu.

When a man has left this country and travelled twenty days westward, he approaches a province on the borders of Manji named Sin-din-fu. The capital, bearing the same name, was anciently very great and noble, governed by a mighty and wealthy sovereign. He died, leaving three sons, who divided the city into three parts, and each enclosed his portion with a wall, which was within the great wall of twenty miles in circuit. They ranked still as kings, and had ample possessions; but the great khan overcame them, and took full possession of their territory. Through the city, a large river of fresh water, abounding with fish, passes and flows on to the ocean, distant eighty or a hundred days' journey; it is called Quian-su. On that current is a very great number of cities and castles, and such a multitude of ships, as no one who has not seen could possibly believe. Equally wonderful is the quantity of merchandise conveyed; indeed it is so broad as to appear a sea and not a river. Within the city, it is crossed by a bridge, wholly of marble, half a mile long and eight paces broad; the upper part is supported by marble columns, and richly painted; and upon it are many houses where merchants expose goods for sale; but these are set up in the morning and taken down in the evening. At one of them, larger than the others, stands the chamberlain of the khan, who receives the duty on the merchandise sold, which is worth annually a thousand golden bezants.†

* Mr Marsden is unable to identify this district. It appears to us that of Han-tchong-fou, which lay exactly in the route of the traveller, whose description very closely corresponds with that given by good authorities.—Astley, vol. iv. p. 54.

† Sin-din-fu is evidently Tching-tou-fou, anciently one of the greatest cities of the empire, though nearly destroyed during the civil war in the sixteenth century. Mr Marsden (pp. 411, 412) is embarrassed by the river, flowing near and even through

The inhabitants are all idolaters; and from that city a man goes five days' journey through castles, villages, and scattered houses. The people subsist by agriculture, and the tract abounds with wild beasts. There are also large manufactures of gauzes and cloth of gold. After travelling these five days, he comes to Thibet.

XLIII.—The Province of Thibet.

This is a very large province; the men have a language of their own, and are idolaters. They border upon Manji and many other countries, and are very great robbers; the extent is such, that it contains eight kingdoms and many cities and castles. There are also extensive rivers, lakes, and mountains, where is found a vast quantity of gold. Cinnamon and coral occur, which last is very dear, because they place it round the neck of their women and their idols, and hold it as a precious jewel. Here are made camlets, and other cloths of silk and gold. There are very skilful enchanters and astrologers, but extremely wicked men, who perform works of the devil, which it were unlawful to relate, they would strike with such amazement. They have mastiff dogs as large as asses, and excellent in taking wild animals. This province was entirely destroyed by Mangou, the fifth great khan, in his wars; and its many villages and castles are all demolished.* Here grow large canes, fifteen paces long and four palms thick, while from one knot to the other is full three palms. The merchants and travellers, who pass through that country in the night, take these canes and set them on fire, when they make

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it, being identified with the grand stream of the Yang-tse-kiang. Yet this is supported by the best editions, and even the word *terra* is commonly used in this journal as synonymous with city. The case we take to be, that the inhabitants mistook this important tributary for the main stream, whose early course through the wilds of Tartary was probably unknown to them.

* This accords with De Guignes, who says: "Mangou Khan named the general Holitai to go and subject Thibet. All the country was desolated, its cities and its castles rased."—Marsden, p. 416.

such a loud crackling noise that lions, bears, and other destructive animals are terrified, and dare not approach. They also split them in the middle, and produce thus so mighty a sound, that it would be heard in the night at the distance of five miles; and the explosion is so alarming, that horses unaccustomed to it often break their reins and harness, and take to flight. For this reason, travellers, riding such horses, bind them by the feet, and stop their eyes and ears.* A man travels twenty days through these countries without finding either inns or victuals; he must therefore carry with him food for himself and his cattle during the whole of that space, meeting always, too, ferocious wild beasts, which are very dangerous.

XLIV.—Another Part of Thibet.

The traveller then comes to a part of Thibet where there are houses and castles; but the people have a bad custom. None of them for the whole world will marry a virtuous maiden, saying that she is worth nothing without having had many lovers. When strangers, therefore, pass through, and have pitched their tents, or taken their lodging in inns, the old women bring their daughters, often to the number of thirty or forty, and offer them as wives during their stay; but they must not carry them thence, either back or forward. When the merchant is about to depart, he gives to the lady some toy or jewel as a testimony that she has lived with him. These jewels she hangs to her neck, and is anxious to have at least twenty; for the more she can show, the higher is she valued, and the more readily obtains a husband. After being married, she is strictly watched, and any infidelity is deeply resented. These people are idolatrous and wicked, not holding it sinful to commit wrong and robbery; in short, they are the greatest thieves in the world. They live on the fruits

* Mr Marsden, p. 416, mentions, as well known in India, the great noise made by houses of cane, when set on fire, and which resembles the discharge of musketry.

of the earth, but mostly by hunting and falconry; and the country contains many of those animals which produce musk, and are called in the Tartar language *gudderi*. That sinful people have many good dogs,* which they employ in the pursuit of wild animals. They have neither the cards nor money circulated by the great khan, but make money of salt. They are poorly clad with the skins of beasts, canvass, and buckram; they have a language of their own, which they call Tebet.† Now I will tell you of Kain-du.

XLV.—The Province of Kain-du.

This is a province lying to the west, having only one king, the inhabitants idolaters, and subject to the great khan. It contains a number of cities and castles, with a lake, in which are found many pearls; but the monarch forbids them, under a severe penalty, to be removed except for his own use; because, if any one were allowed to take them, they would become worth almost nothing. There is also a mountain, whence are quarried turquoise stones in great abundance, very large and beautiful; but he does not allow them to be removed unless by his mandate. In this province they have a strange and base custom, that a man thinks there is no disgrace in an improper intimacy between his wife or sister and a stranger or other person. On the contrary, when such a one comes to reside in his house, the master presently goes out, and leaves him with his wife. The visiter remains often three days, and places a hat or something else at the window

* Hamilton particularly observes that the dogs of Thibet are very stout and ferocious.—Description of Hindostan, 2 vols 4to, vol. ii. p. 570.

† The country here described is the north-eastern part of Thibet, inhabited by the people called Si-fan. It is extremely little known, but there is every reason to believe it to correspond with our author's description. There is understood to be considerable laxity in regard to the virtue of females before marriage; but the extreme ill-conduct here stated is probably confined to the great routes, where the resort of caravan-merchants affords temptation to such irregularities.

as a signal; and the husband never returns till he sees this taken away. This is said to be done in honour of their idols, who on that account bestow on them many blessings. Their gold is in small rods,—the value being determined according to the weight, and not marked by any stamp. The small money is thus made: they take salt, form it into a shape, so that it weighs about half a pound, and eighty of these are worth a rod of gold. They have a very great number of the animals which yield the musk; likewise fishes from the same lake whence the pearls are drawn; also the usual kinds of wild birds and beasts. No wine is obtained from vines, but it is made from grain or rice with many spices, which makes a good liquor. In that province also grows a tree called *garofol;* it is small, with leaves like a laurel, but longer and narrower; it bears a small white flower.* It yields ginger, cinnamon, and other spices, which come into our country; but I have now said to you enough of Kain-du. After travelling ten days you come to a river which bounds it, named Brius. In it is found a great quantity of gold dust; and on its banks abundance of cinnamon; it flows on to the ocean. Now let us tell you of Caraian.†

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* The clove is here evidently described,—a statement which Mr Marsden considers as reflecting beyond any other on the traveller's accuracy. We cannot, however, help observing, that the *flora* of this country is wholly unknown; and there is every reason to suppose it rich and peculiar. From Turner's account it appears that varieties of cinnamon and of other aromatic plants abound in Thibet; and there seems no reason why the clove or some plant resembling it should not occur. Count Boni quotes Bissachere for its existence in Tonquin.—Il Millione, vol. ii. p. 260.

† I reluctantly feel obliged to differ from my predecessors as to the course followed in the subsequent chapter. Mr Marsden, with Gaubil and De Guignes, considers Kain-du as Yung-ning-tou, and the route thence to be through Yun-nan to Yong-tchang, on the borders of Ava. Count Boni states, that after much hesitation he yielded to this opinion. I am persuaded, on the contrary, that it lay through Thibet, and then down the highest steeps of the Himalaya. The route from Tching-tou to Yung-ning through Thibet would form a great circuit, with the sole

XLVI.—The Province of Caraian.

When a man has departed and crossed the river, he enters this province, which is large, and contains seven kingdoms extending westward. The people are all idolaters, and under the dominion of the great khan. The king is a son of his, named Essetemur, and is great, rich, and powerful. He is also brave and upright, ruling his country with much justice.* When the traveller has crossed the river, he passes, during a journey of five days, through a country where there is abundance of cities and castles, with many very good horses; and the people are supported by cattle and the produce of land. Their language is extremely difficult to understand. At the end of these five days, he comes to the capital of the country, named Yaci,† which is particularly great and

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apparent view of passing through that wild country, while there was a direct and shorter route through the interior of China. Between the latter place and Yong-tchang, thirty days are spent, corresponding to above 400 miles, and in which the traveller passes through three countries, one of them containing seven kingdoms; yet the actual distance is only 200 miles. The deflection westward is very small; yet the general line of route is nearly north-west. The rugged character of the country, the stupendous mountains, the abundance of gold and salt,* the superstitious priesthood, all agree with Thibet. There is, doubtless, reason to think that Yun-nan may in these respects resemble it; yet by no means on so vast a scale. I shall not be able to identify the names of places; but as little has Mr Marsden on his route been able to do so. Generally, they are uncouth and dissimilar to Chinese terms. We shall soon come to a stupendous descent, occupying two days and a half, exactly agreeing with that from Thibet to the plain of India; while Yun-nan, though mountainous, is never described as a table-land. Lastly, we shall see the traveller passing through the very part of Yun-nan here supposed, yet not recognising it as ever seen before, but describing it as altogether a new country.

* There are no means of identifying this sovereign, whom we cannot suppose to be the son and successor of Kublai; but De Guignes mentions Yeson-timour, a nephew of that prince, who may possibly have ruled in this district.

† This place is considered by Mr Marsden and Count Boni as Tali-fou in Yun-nan, but without any correspondence of name

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* Hamilton, Description of Hindostan, vol. ii. p. 568.

noble, with many merchants and numerous arts. There are here various sects, Saracens, idolaters, and Nestorian Christians. There is a good deal of grain and rice, yet the country is not very fertile. They make a drink of the latter which intoxicates like wine. Money is formed of porcelain, such as is found in the sea,* and eighty pieces are worth one bar of gold, or eight of silver. They have pits whence they draw vast quantities of salt, from which the king derives a great revenue.† Adultery is not considered as a crime, unless when accompanied with violence. There is a lake here extending a hundred miles, and containing many large fishes, the best in the world. They use the raw flesh of all fowls and beasts; for the poor people go to the market and get it newly taken from the animal, put it in garlic sauce, then eat it; the rich likewise eat it raw, but previously cut into small pieces, and the sauce mixed with good spices.‡

XLVII.—The Province of Karazan and its great Serpents.

When a man leaves Yaci, or Chiaci, and goes ten days westward, he finds the province of Karazan, with a capital of the same name. The people are all idolaters, and subject to the great khan; the king is a son of that monarch, named Kogatin. Gold dust is found in the river, and on the mountains in large pieces so abundantly that a bar is given for six of silver. The porcelain, too, formerly described circulates for money, but is procured from India. Here are snakes and serpents so huge as to strike all men with astonishment; they are ten paces long, ten palms broad, and have no feet, but only a hoof like that of the lion; the

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or description. One of the appellations given to it in the French edition is Chiaci. I would point out Chiaki in Thibet, which would be reached soon after passing the San-pou, and has near it the great lake of Palté.

* These are cowries, found chiefly in the Maldives, but also abundantly in Silhet, a district of Bengal. Marsden, p. 427.

† The abundance of rock-salt in Thibet is well known.

‡ Mr Marsden, p. 429, has collected full evidence of the custom of eating raw flesh in Thibet.

nose is like a loaf of bread, the mouth so huge that it would swallow at once a man whole; the teeth are immense, nor is there any wild beast whom they do not strike with terror. There are smaller ones eight paces long and six palms broad. The mode of catching them is this:—They remain during the day in great caverns under the earth, to avoid the heat, but at night go out to feed, and seize all the animals whom they can reach; they also seek drink at the rivers, fountains, and lakes, and then make a deep track in the sand, as if a barrel had been dragged through it. In it the people fix a stake, fasten to it a steel instrument sharpened like a razor, and cover it over with sand. When the serpent comes through the track, and strikes against the steel, he is pierced with such violence, that his body is divided from one side to the other, as high as the umbilical cord, and he presently dies. They then take the body and extract the gall-bladder, which they sell very dear, being an excellent medicine for the bite of a mad dog, when administered in small dozes. It is also valuable in childbirth, and when given to the woman, a safe delivery immediately follows. The flesh also is sold at a high price, being considered delicate food.* The serpent also enters the dens of lions, bears, and other fierce animals, and devours their whelps, when he can get at them. Here, too, are very large horses, which are carried into India to be sold. They cut two or three nerves from the tail, so that they may not strike with it the man who rides, which is considered disgraceful. These people ride like the French, with long staffs, have arms covered with buffalo hide, and carry lances, spears,

* This account of the alligator is by no means strictly accurate; but as the animal was probably not seen but described upon the hearsay of not very intelligent informants, this cannot be considered wonderful. The eating of the flesh of the serpent tribe, even as a delicacy, is by no means uncommon among rude Asiatics. Nor is the superstitious value attached to the gall-bladder without example among ignorant tribes.—Marsden, pp. 432, 433.

and poisoned arrows. Before the great khan conquered them they had a wicked custom, that when any stranger came to lodge with them who was agreeable, wise, and opulent, they killed him during the night by poison or some other mode. This was not out of enmity or with the view of taking his money, but because they imagined that his wisdom and other good qualities would thus remain with them. However, about thirty-five years ago, after that monarch conquered the country, he prohibited this crime, which, from fear of him, they no longer commit. Now let us tell of another province called Kardandan.

XLVIII.—The Province of Kardandan.

When a man departs from Karazan, and travels to the westward, he enters a province named Kardandan, inhabited by idolaters, and subject to the great khan. The chief city is called Vociam. All the people have their teeth, both upper and lower, covered with gold, which thus appear to be made of that metal.* The men are soldiers, and regard nothing but war; the women, with the slaves, perform all the work. When any lady has been delivered of a boy, the husband goes to bed, taking the child with him, and remains there forty days. He thus allows rest to the mother, who is only obliged to suckle the infant. All his friends then come and make a festival, when the wife rises, manages the domestic affairs, and serves her husband, still lying in bed. They eat all kinds of flesh, both raw and cooked, and rice dressed along with it, and make a very good wine of rice and spices. They have money of gold and porcelain, and give a bar of gold for five of silver, having no mines of the latter metal within five days' distance; by this exchange the merchants make great profit. This people have neither idols nor churches, but adore the master of the house, and say of him, "we are his; and he is our god." They

* Count Boni quotes from Martini the account of a country north of Yun-nan, and consequently Thibet, where this practice prevails.—Il Millione ii. 269.

have neither letters nor writing, which is not wonderful, because they live in an unfrequented place, that cannot be visited in the summer on account of the air, which is then so corrupted and pestilent that no foreigner can live there. Whenever they have dealings together, they select a piece of timber, square or round, cleave it in the middle, and each takes a half; this must be done before two, three, or four witnesses. When the payment comes to be made, the one receives the money and gives his half of the wood.* In all those provinces there is no physician, but when any one is sick, doctors and exorcists of evil spirits are sent for, who, on coming to the patient, begin their incantations, beating instruments, singing and dancing. In a short time one of them falls to the ground, foams at the mouth, and becomes half-dead, when the devil enters into his body. The other magicians then ask the half-dead man what is the cause of the patient's illness. The demon answers from his mouth that the sufferer has given displeasure to such or such a spirit, who is therefore tormenting him. They then say, "we beseech you to pardon him, and take in compensation for his blood the presents which we now exhibit." Then if the sick man is to die, the fiend in the body of the magician says,—"the spirit has been wronged and displeased to such a degree, that he will not spare him for any thing in the world." If on the contrary a cure is to take place, the devil from the body says, "take so many sheep and so many dishes of rich pottage, and make a sacrifice of them to the angry spirit." The relations of the patient do every thing thus ordered, killing the sheep, sprinkling the blood, and preparing the dishes of pottage. A great assemblage is made of men and women, who hold a joyous feast, dancing and singing songs in praise of the spirit. They burn incense and myrrh, with which they fumigate and illuminate the whole house.

* Mr Marsden, p. 440, gives other examples of this rude mode of bargaining.

When they have acted thus for about an hour, the first magician again falls down, and they inquire if the sick man is now pardoned and will be cured. It is then answered that he is not yet pardoned, but something more must be done, after which forgiveness will be granted. This order is obeyed, when he says, "he is pardoned, and will be immediately cured." The company then exclaim, "the spirit is on our side," and having eaten the sheep and drunk the pottage with great joy and festivity, they return to their homes.*

XLIX.—Of the great Battle fought between the Tartars and the King of Mien.

Now I must mention a very great battle which was fought in the kingdom of Vociam, and you shall hear all how it happened. In the year of our Lord 1272, the great khan sent a mighty captain, named Nescardin, with 12,000 men, to defend the province of Caraian. He was a prudent man, very strong in arms and skilful in war; and the soldiers with him were good and very brave warriors. Now the King of Mien and of Bangala† were afraid lest he should invade their territory; yet they thought they were able to overcome and destroy the whole army in such a manner that the

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* The precise position of this country cannot be identified; but it is evidently situated on the most rugged heights of the great mountain-chain, inhabited by a demi-savage people. The fantastic conduct ascribed to the husband on his wife's accouchement is very positively stated in regard to certain South American tribes; and it is not altogether impossible that it may exist in some corners of Asia; but it seems more probable that the traveller was misled by false reports. The enchantments described are those usually practised by the priests of Fo, who have their central seat in Thibet.

† The versions present a curious difficulty, whether one or two kings are here meant. The Paris Latin is clear: "Rex Mien et Rex Bangilla *audientes*." The Basle edition is similar. Ramusio seems to make only one, and Mr Marsden considers this confirmed by the context. Nothing can be made of the French edition: "Le roi de Mien et de Bangala ke molt estoit poisant *rois*,—ceste *roi*,—quant *il* soit," &c. My impression is that the two kings united their forces, but only that of Mien came forward in the combat.

great khan might never feel inclined to send another into the same quarter. They assembled, therefore, 60,000 horse and foot, with 2000 elephants, each of which had on its back a castle well fortified and defended by twelve, fourteen, or sixteen men. The King of Mien came with the above army to the city of Vociam, where was the array of the Tartars, and took post in a plain at the distance of three days' journey. Nescardin was somewhat alarmed, considering how small a force he had in comparison with the host of the King of Mien; but he took courage, reflecting that his troops were brave and most valiant warriors. He therefore marched to meet them in the plain of Vociam, and pitched his camp near a great forest, filled with lofty trees, into which he was aware that elephants could not enter. The King of Mien, seeing the army of Nescardin, advanced to attack it. The Tartars went with great boldness to meet them, but when their horses saw the elephants with the wooden castles upon them, stationed and arranged in the first line, they were struck with such terror that the riders could not, either by force or any contrivance, make them approach. They, therefore, immediately alighted, and tied them to the trees, when the infantry returned to the line of elephants, and began to discharge their arrows with the utmost violence. Those who were on the backs of the animals fought bravely; but the Tartars were stronger, and more accustomed to battle. They wounded very severely with these missiles a multitude of the elephants, which, being terrified, took to flight and rushed with violence into the adjacent wood. As they could not be restrained from entering, and rushing backward and forward through the thick trees in confusion, they broke the wooden castles on their backs, and destroyed all their equipments. When the Tartars saw these animals disposed of, they ran to their horses, which were bound to the trees, mounted them, and rushed upon the warriors of the King of Mien. They began the attack with a shower of arrows, but as the king and his troops still defended themselves

valiantly, they drew their swords, and rushed into close combat. Now mighty blows were struck; swords and spears were fiercely thrust on both sides; heads, arms, and hands were struck off; and many warriors fell to the earth dead and dying. The noise and cries would have drowned the loudest thunder. At length, after mid-day, the host of Mien gave way; and the king, with all who survived the battle, took to flight, pursued by the Tartars, who killed many of the fugitives.* When satisfied with pursuit, they returned to the wood to catch the elephants. They endeavoured to stop the flight of these animals by cutting down the trees and laying them across; yet they are so intelligent, that the soldiers would not have succeeded but for the aid of some of the captives taken in battle, through whose means they were able to recover two hundred. From this time the great khan began to employ elephants in his army, which he had not hitherto done. Afterwards that monarch conquered the lands of Mien, and added them to his dominion.

L.—Of the great Descent.

When you have departed from the said province of Caraian, there begins a great descent, which continues for two days and a half;† and in all this journey nothing occurs worthy of notice, except that there is a great space in which a market is held on certain days of the year. Thither come many merchants from divers countries and districts, some of whom bring gold and silver to exchange; and they give an ounce of

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* Ramusio has here several sentences of criticism upon the military conduct of the King of Mien; but they are not supported by any early edition, and such discussion is quite unusual with our traveller. They conclude also with the erroneous statement that the great khan subdued, in consequence, the whole territories of the King of Bengal and Mien. I have not, therefore, inserted them.

† This immense descent without any previous rise is quite what might be expected from the table-land of Thibet. There is no reason to suppose any thing similar in Yun-nan, which, though mountainous, is nowhere described as a table-land.

the former for five of the latter. None but those who bring the gold can penetrate into the countries where it is produced, so difficult and intricate are the roads. When a man has travelled these two days and a half, he comes to a district which is called Anniz, on the borders of India, towards the south, and then he goes for fifteen days through a region covered with woods filled with elephants, unicorns, and other savage beasts, but not containing any human habitation.

LI.—Of the City of Mien, and the most beautiful Tomb of the King.

At the termination of these wild and pathless tracts is a large and noble city called Mien, the capital of the province.* The people are all idolaters, with a language peculiar to themselves, and are subject to the great khan.

* De Guignes and Gaubil think that Mien is Pegu, which, by d'Anville's map of Yun-nan, really appears to bear that name in China, and to this Count Boni assents. Marsden (p. 445), sensible that this would derange the whole itinerary, fixes it in the capital of Ava. I cannot, however, see that such a position is consistent with the data in the travels. In the following chapter, Bengal, in reference to Mien, is said to be, in Ramusio, "posta ne' confini dell' India *verso mezo di*," which Mr Marsden translates "on the southern confines of India," an expression to which it seems here impossible to attach any distinct idea. But the two Paris editions state its position *to the south* quite distinct, and in a different place from its relation to India. The Italian MS. in the Museum says, "una provincia *posta verso mezodi*," Pipino: "*ad meridiem* in confinio Indiæ." There seems thus a complete agreement that Bengal lay south of Mien, which must then lie between it and the Himmalehs. A probable place seems to be Beyhar, always a separate kingdom, and in the 16th century very powerful, till it was taken and its temples demolished by the Mohammedans in 1661. (Hamilton, vol. i. p. 216.) Turner describes the country north of it as singularly desolate. The position of Silhet might perhaps agree still better as to distance from the Himmalehs. These gilded structures, as a new object, struck the Tartars with astonishment; but Mr Marsden (p. 450) shows them to be common even in small cities of the north of India. Those here described are on a very small scale, compared with similar ones in the capitals of Pegu and Ava. No one, I think, who reads Major Symes' description of the variety and magnificence of the gilded edifices in the Burmese metropolis, can suppose the present account applicable to it.

About this city I will tell you a thing very remarkable. There was anciently in it a rich and powerful king, who, being about to die, commanded that on his tomb should be erected two towers, one of gold, and the other of silver. They are full ten paces high, and of a suitable thickness ; the first, being composed of stone, is covered all over with gold to the thickness of a finger, so that to the spectator it appears wholly of that metal. The summit is round, and filled with little golden bells, which the wind, whenever it strikes them, causes to ring. The other tower is similarly formed, but is coated with silver, and has silver bells. By these buildings the king intended to display his greatness and dignity, and they are the most beautiful and valuable to be seen in the world. Between them he caused the sepulchre to be constructed, where he is now buried. When the great khan conquered that city, he desired all the players and buffoons, of whom there were a great number in his court, to go and achieve the conquest, offering them a captain and some warlike aid.* The jesters willingly undertook the affair, and setting out with the proffered assistance, subdued this province of Mien. When they came to that noble city, and saw these splendid edifices, they admired exceedingly, and sent to the great khan an account of their beauty, and of the manner in which they were constructed, asking if he wished them to be demolished, and the gold and silver sent to him. The monarch, on hearing this, commanded that they should not be destroyed, since the king had erected them to commemorate his greatness, and no Tartar touches any thing belonging to a dead man. They were therefore to continue in the same condition as they now stood. This province contains elephants,

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* Mr Marsden (p. 450) is much scandalized at this idea of an army of jesters, and endeavours to believe that sorcerers and jugglers were rather intended. The jesters, however, have all the manuscripts in their favour ; and the whole appears to us to have been a frolic, including a display of the facility with which the conquest could be achievéd. Care would of course be taken, and is indeed intimated, to support them by more experienced warriors.

wild oxen, large and beautiful, stags, deer, and other animals. Now, let me tell you of another which is called Bangala.

LII.—Of the Province of Bangala.

This is a province towards the south, which, in the year 1290, while I, Marco, was at the court of the great khan, was not yet conquered, but the army was there, ready to march for that purpose. It has a king and languages of its own, and the people are most wicked idolaters. They are on the confines of India.* The barons and lords of that country have oxen as tall as elephants, but not so weighty; and live on flesh and rice. They have great abundance of silk, with which they carry on extensive manufactures; also ginger, sugar, and many other costly spices. This place is visited by numerous merchants, who purchase slaves, make them eunuchs, and then either sell or convey them to other places.†

LIII.—Of the Province of Kangigu.

Kangigu‡ is a province towards the east, subject to a king; the people are all idolaters; have a language of their own; and owning the supremacy of the great khan, they pay him an annual tribute. The king is so luxurious as to have 300 wives, for as soon as he hears of a beautiful woman in the country he takes her to himself. The people have much gold and many precious spices; but being far from the sea, their commodities do not bring the full value. They have many elephants and beasts of various other kinds. All the men and

* We may again observe that Bengal is not considered here as part of India.

† It seems from this imperfect account of Bengal, and no itinerary being given to it, that Marco did not actually visit the country, which indeed, in its existing relation to his master, he could scarcely have done with safety.

‡ The route here evidently lies across Assam, Cashgar, and Cassay, rude territories to the north of the Birman empire, which has exercised over them a precarious rule; but part has been recently annexed to British dominion. The practice of tattooing is known to prevail in some of these districts.

women paint their bodies, the colours being worked in with the claws of lions, dragons, and eagles, and thus never effaced. In this manner they stain their neck, breast, hands, limbs, and indeed their whole person. This is considered extremely genteel, and the more any one is painted, the higher is his rank considered. Now let us tell you of another province named Amu.

LIV.—Of the Province of Amu.

Amu* is also a province towards the east, subject to the great khan. The people are idolaters, live by pasturage and agriculture, and have a language of their own. The ladies wear on their arms and legs valuable bracelets of gold and silver, and the men have these still finer and rarer. They have good horses in considerable numbers, many of which the Indians purchase and sell again to much advantage. They have also abundance of oxen and buffaloes, because they have extensive and good pastures; in short, they have plenty of the means of subsistence. From Amu to Kangigu, are fifteen days, and thence to Bangala, which is the third province behind, are thirty days. Now let us come to another province, which is called Tholoman, and lies eight journeys from this to the east.

LV.—Of the Province of Tholoman.

Tholoman† is a third province towards the east. All the people are idolaters, have a language of their own, and are under the great khan. They are handsome, of rather a brown complexion, good men at arms, and have a number of cities, castles, and forts, on the top of very high

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* Bamoo, or Bhamo, a province known to lie south-east of Ava; but we have very little information respecting it.

† Mr Marsden is at a loss respecting this name, and his suggestion of its application to the Birman empire generally is quite untenable. There seems no reason for not acquiescing in the idea thrown out in Astley's Voyages (vol. iv. p. 596) of its being the part of Yun-nan inhabited by the Lolos, governed by brave feudal chiefs, nearly independent, though owning the supremacy of the court of China.—See Account of China, Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. iii. p. 46.

mountains. When they die, the bodies are burned, and the bones which cannot be consumed are placed in chests and carried to the caverns of high mountains, where they are kept suspended, so that neither man nor beast can touch them. Gold is found here; but the small money is of porcelain, which circulates in all these provinces. The merchants, though few, are rich; the people live on flesh and rice, and have many good spices.

LVI.—Of the Province of Cyn-gui and its Lions.

Cyn-gui is a province likewise situated towards the east, and when a man leaves Tholoman, he goes twelve days along a river, where there are towns and castles, but nothing else worth mentioning. At the end of these twelve days, he finds the city Sinugul, very large and noble. The inhabitants are all idolaters, and subject to the great khan. They live by merchandise and arts, and weave cloths of the bark of trees, which make fine summer dresses. They are good men at arms; but they have no money except paper. There are in this country so many lions, that if a man were to sleep out of doors, he would presently be killed and eaten by them; and at night, when a bark sails along the river, if it were not kept at a good distance from the bank, they would rush in and carry off the crew. However, though these animals be so large and dangerous, the natives have a wonderful manner of defending themselves; for the dogs of that country are so daring, that they will assault a large one, and, seconded by a man, will kill him. I will tell you how: when a man is on horseback with two of these dogs, as soon as they see a lion, they throw themselves behind him, and bite his thighs and body. The lion turns furiously round, but they wheel about with him so swiftly, that he cannot reach them. He then retreats till he comes to a tree, against which he places his back, and turns his face to the dogs; but they continue always biting him from behind, and making him turn round and round. Meantime the man

discharges arrows without ceasing, till the animal falls down dead, and thus one man and two spirited dogs are sufficient to kill a large lion. The inhabitants of this province have a good deal of silk, and a great trade is carried on to all quarters along the river.

LVII.—Arrival at Sin-din-fu, and Journey back to Gin-gui.

Continuing to journey on its banks for twelve days more, we discover a number of cities and castles. The people are idolaters, subject to the great khan, and use paper money. Some are good at arms, others are merchants and artificers. At the end of the twelve days, the traveller comes to Sin-din-fu,* of which mention has been made above. He then rides seventy days through provinces and lands which we formerly went over, and have already described. At the end of that period, he comes to Gin-gui, where we formerly were.†

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* Mr Marsden complains here of a perplexity for which there does not appear the slightest ground. He is, indeed, partly confused by a blunder of Ramusio, who speaks of the twelve days as if they were the same as the twelve days in the last chapter; but the French edition distinctly states it as a second journey. Now we have the ascertained points of Bamoo on one side, and on the other Sin-din-fu, which the reader may recollect as identified with Tching-tou-fou; and we have thirty-two days' journey, which agrees with the distance; while intervening branches and tributaries of the Yang-tse-kiang amply furnish the rivers. Every thing agrees most distinctly; and how the learned writer could fly off to Koei-tcheou I cannot conceive. The only difficulty respects the precise position of Sinugul, called by Ramusio Cintigui. I have little hesitation in agreeing with Count Boni, who considers it Sou-tcheou, at the junction of the Kiang with the river from Tching-tou-fou; for the last syllable pronounced hard and guttural, is always made *gu* by our traveller. Here, too, on examining the map, we shall see clearly that, in going from Bamoo to Tching-tou-fou, he must have passed through Yun-nan, and even near Yong-tchang. Yet he in no degree recognises it, and describes it in terms wholly different from what he did in his former (supposed) passage. Is not this a strong proof that his route then was wholly through a different country?

† Mr Marsden (p. 462) yields here to complete despair, and conceives that any attempt to connect this with the remainder of the route as constituting one journey would be quite fruitless. It appears to him that there must be two itineraries, one

LVIII.—Cities of Ca-cian-fu, Cian-glu, and Cian-gli.

From Gin-gui or Geo-gui a man travels four days, finding a variety of cities and castles. The people are great artificers and merchants, subject to the mighty khan, and use paper money. At the end of the four days you come to Ca-cian-fu,* a large and noble city, lying to the south, in the province of Cathay. The inhabitants are subject to the same monarch, are all idolaters, and burn the bodies of their dead. They have a good supply of silk, which they make into different kinds of cloth. A large river flows past it, along which great abundance of merchandise is conveyed to Kambalu, with which it is made to communicate by the digging of many canals. Now let us pass to another city called Cian-glu. The natives are idolaters, subject to the khan, use paper money, and burn the bodies of their dead. In that city, salt is made very extensively, and I will tell you how. There is a species of earth full of it, and they pile it up in heaps, upon which they throw a great quantity of water, to satu-

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broken off and the other begun in a manner equally abrupt. The confusion has arisen altogether from the gross corruption of Ramusio's and all the other texts to which the learned writer had access. In the French edition, every thing is connected in the most distinct manner. He arrives at Tching-tou-fou, which he notices as having been formerly visited. He then travels *seventy* days' journey back along the route he had come, and notices having already given a description of it, which he has of course no occasion to repeat. He then arrives at Gin-gui, the same as Geo-gui or Gouza, already mentioned as the point where the two routes divide, one leading south-west, the other south-east. Having completed the former, he now enters upon the latter. Ramusio gives only twenty days from Sin-din-fu, a period quite inadequate. The Italian MS. does the same, though Mr Marsden has not understood its almost illegible characters. Pipino and the Basle editor have made a strange blunder indeed. They have imagined the Cyn-gui mentioned in the last chapter to be the same as Gin-gui, though the places are a thousand miles distant, and all the intermediate itinerary is therefore expunged as an excrescence.

* Pa-zan-fu, *Ramusio.* This appears to be Ho-kien-fou, a large city of Pe-che-lee, with walls four miles in circuit. It has a river on each side, but at a little distance; these may probably be connected with it by canals.—Marsden, p. 463.

rate it with the mineral. They next boil it in large cauldrons of iron, till it evaporates, and leaves a white and minute salt, which is exported to all the countries round.* Five days' journey from Cian-glu is Cian-gli,† where are many cities and castles. It is a town of Cathay, and the whole people are idolaters, subject to the khan, and use paper money. Through the middle of that territory flows a great river, on which is conveyed much merchandise of various kinds.

LIX.—Condi-fu—Rebellion against the Great Khan.

In departing from Cian-gli, we come in six days to Condi-fu, a great city, which the khan conquered by force of arms, but still it is the noblest in the province.‡ There is a wonderful abundance of silk, as well as orchards with many delicate fruits, and the situation is delightful; it has also under it fifteen other cities of great importance and commerce, whence it derives high honour and dignity. In the year 1273, the khan gave to Litan, one of his barons, 70,000 horse to defend and secure that city; but when the said baron had remained some time in the country, he arranged with certain men to betray it, and rebel against his lord. When the khan knew this, he sent two of his commanders, Aguil and Mongatai, with many troops, against the traitor. On their approach, the rebel went forth to meet them with his forces, consisting of a hundred thousand cavalry and many infantry, both of the country and of

* Cian-glu or Chan-glu, is Tsan-tcheou, a considerable town, still in Pe-che-lee. Mr Marsden (pp. 464, 465) seems to prove that the salt here mentioned is nitre or saltpetre. Count Boni (vol. ii. pp. 294, 295) identifies the two last places with Poo-ling-fou and Moantchin; but we incline to prefer Mr Marsden's sites.

† Though there is no resemblance of name, this appears to be Te-tcheou, on the river Eu-ho, and at the entrance of the province of Shan-tung.—Marsden, p. 466.

‡ Tudinfu, *Ramusio;* Tsi-nan-fou, capital of Shan-tung, and of a kingdom long independent. It contains very fine buildings, and modern travellers agree with our author in describing the environs as particularly fertile and beautiful.

those he had brought with him; and there was a very great battle between him and those two chiefs. Litan was killed, with many others; and the khan caused all those who had been guilty to be put to death, and spared the lives of the rest.* Now let us tell of another country named Sin-gui.

LX.—Cities of Sin-gui, Lin-gui, Pin-gui, and Cin-gui.

When a man has gone south from Condi-fu, he finds cities and castles, many animals of the chase and birds, with a vast abundance of all productions, and then comes to Sin-gui,† which is noble, great, and beautiful, with much merchandise and many arts; the whole people are idolaters, subject to the khan, and use paper money. They have a river which is of great utility, because the people of the country have divided the stream which comes from the south into two parts; one goes eastward towards Manji, the other westward towards Cathay; and the land has thus a wonderful number of ships, though not of large size, with which they convey goods to other provinces, and bring thence an almost incredible quantity of merchandise. When a man departs from Sin-gui and goes eight days to the south, he finds many rich cities and castles. The people are idolaters, subject to the khan; they burn the bodies of their dead, and use paper money. At the end of eight days he arrives at a town named Lin-gui,‡ great and noble, with men-at-

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* This revolt is recorded with nearly the same circumstances in the Chinese annals. The name there given to the leader is Litan, with which the French version agrees, while in Ramusio it is corrupted into Lucansor.—Marsden, p. 468.

† I cannot but much wonder that Mr Marsden (p. 470, and Count Boni, vol. ii. p. 299) should place Sin-gui at Lin-tsin-tcheou, which lies *north* of Tsi-nan, instead of *south*, and would be going completely backwards. It appears quite clearly to be Tsi-ning-tcheou, a town agreeing in name and situation, and placed on a central part of the great canal. Though holding only the second rank, the traffic derived from this situation raises it to a level with great cities.

‡ J. Arrowsmith has here Lin-tching-hien, for placing which he had doubtless good authority, though I cannot find it on any other map.

arms, and also arts and merchandise. Here are wild animals and every kind of provision in abundance. When he departs from Lin-gui, he goes three days to the south, finding cities and castles under the powerful khan; the people idolatrous, and burning the bodies of their dead. There is much excellent hunting of birds and beasts. At the end of these three days, he discovers a very good city named Pin-gui.* The people have all things necessary for subsistence, raise much silk, and pay a large revenue to the sovereign. A great quantity of merchandise is laden here for the province of Manji. When a man has departed from Pin-gui, and travelled two days with his face to the south, through beautiful and rich countries, he finds the city of Cin-gui,† very large, and full of merchandise and arts. The people are wholly idolatrous, burn the bodies of their dead, their money is paper, and they are under the khan. They have much grain and grass. When a man leaves Cin-gui, he finds cities, villages, and castles, with handsome dogs and good pasturage; the people being such as are above described.

LXI.—Of the great River Kara-moran.

At the end of two days a man finds the great river called Kara-moran, coming from the lands of Prester John. It is full, broad, and so deep that a large ship can pass through its channel; and there are on it full 15,000 vessels, all belonging to the khan, meant for conveying his goods when he goes to the islands of the sea, which is distant about a day's journey. And each of these ships requires fifteen mariners, and carries fifteen horses with their riders, provisions, and every thing else necessary for them.‡ When a man passes

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* Evidently Pi-tcheou, a considerable city of the second rank.

† Sut-zi-hien, in the Jesuits' map, agrees as to situation, and has some resemblance of name. It is curious that these three last places are not in Ramusio, nor indeed any other edition, except the two Paris and the Crusca.

‡ This is evidently the great stream of the Hoang-ho, or Yellow River, the second in China. The vessels are doubtless

that river, he enters the province of Manji, and I will tell you how it was conquered by the khan.

LXII.—Of the Province of Manji, and how it was made subject to the Great Khan.

In the extensive province of Manji there was a lord and king named Facfur, who, excepting the great khan, was the mightiest sovereign in the world, the most powerful in money and people; but the men are not good at arms, nor have horses trained to war, nor experience in battle and military operations, otherwise they would never have lost so strong a country. All the lands are surrounded by waters so deep that they cannot be passed unless by bridges, and the chief cities are encompassed by broad ditches filled with water. The khan, however, in the year of our Lord 1273, sent one of his barons, Bayam Cinqsan, which means Bayam with the Hundred Eyes: for the King of Manji had found out by astrology, that he could lose his kingdom only by a man having a hundred eyes. This Bayam marched with a very great force, many ships, horse and foot, and came to the first city of Manji, called Koi-gan-zu, which we will presently describe. He called upon it to surrender; but the people refused. He then went to another city, which also refused, and so he passed five, leaving them behind, because he knew that the khan was sending a large additional force. He took, however, the sixth by storm, and then successively reduced other twelve; after which he marched direct to the capital of the kingdom, called Kin-sai, where the king and queen resided. When the monarch saw this great army, he was struck with such terror that he fled from the continent with many of his people, having 1000 ships, and sought refuge among the islands. The queen, however, remained and defended herself as well as she could against Bayam. But having at length asked what was the name of that commander,

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exaggerated, as indeed numbers generally are in this and other works of that age. Mr Marsden conjectures that in transcribing a cipher has been added, and that it should have been 1500.

and being told it was Bayam with the Hundred Eyes, she remembered the prophecy mentioned above, and immediately surrendered the city to him.* Presently all the cities of Manji yielded, and the whole world does not contain such a kingdom, and I will now describe its magnificence.

LXIII.—Of the Piety and Justice of the King towards his Subjects.

This King Facfur maintained 15,000 poor children, because in that province many are exposed as soon as they are born by parents who cannot support them; so, when a rich man had no issue, he went to the king and got as many as he pleased. And when the boys and girls came of age, the king married them together, and gave them the means of living; and thus were educated 20,000 males or females annually. He did another thing: when he went through any place and saw two fine houses, and by the side of them a small one, he inquired why the first were greater than the other; and being told that it belonged to a poor man, who could not afford to build one larger, presently he gave him money enough to enable him to do so. He made himself be served by more than 1000 domestic servants of both sexes. He maintained his kingdom in such justice, that no evil was done, and all commodities could be left unguarded except by the royal equity. Now I have given you an account of the king; I will tell you of the queen. She was led to the great khan, who made her be honoured and served as a powerful, sovereign; but the king, her husband, never came out of the islands of the ocean, and died there, and thus

* The Chinese annals generally agree with this narrative, though with some difference of circumstances. Considering the firmness displayed by the unfortunate queen, we may infer that she had more cogent motives for surrender than the above ridiculous superstition. She does appear to have made little or no resistance. Her honourable captivity, and the attentions paid to her by Kublai's queen, are recorded by other authorities.—Marsden, p. 479-481.

the whole kingdom remained with the khan.* Now let us tell of the province of Manji, and the manners and customs of the people; beginning with the city of Koi-gan-zu.

LXIV.—Of the Cities of Koi-gan-zu, Pau-chym, and Chaym.

Koi-gan-zu is a great, rich, and noble city, at the entrance of the province of Manji, lying to the south. The whole people are subject to the khan; they are idolaters, and burn the bodies of their dead. It lies on the river Kara-moran, and hence is full of ships; for many merchants bring their commodities thither to be distributed throughout other cities. It is the capital of the province. Here is made a very great quantity of salt, which is supplied thence to forty different towns; the khan has a large revenue from this and other trades here carried on.† And now let me tell you of another city called Pau-chym.

When a man departs from Koi-gan-zu, he goes a whole day along a causeway finely built of stone, and on each side is a large water, so that it is impossible to enter the province unless by this causeway. He then finds a city called Pau-chym;‡ all the people are idolaters, burn

* It seems somewhat odd, that Marco should adopt so panegyrical a tone towards a prince whom he might have been supposed to view from a hostile position, especially as the Chinese annals represent him voluptuous and dissolute. He may have had amiable qualities, and the tone in Kublai's court seems to have been that of kindness towards the fallen dynasty. During the long voyage, too, which the Poli made with the Princess of Manji, and the consequent intimacy, she may have inspired them with favourable impressions respecting her father. Ramusio only has one or two sentences of a different tendency, but they ill accord with the rest, and the facts are more fully brought forward afterwards. The collecting of exposed children, and educating those that survive, is still a practice of the Chinese government.

† This is Hoai-ngan-fou, which quite answers the description here given. The salt is drawn from saline marshes in its vicinity. It is not the capital of Kiang-nan, but, as already observed, the provinces were then differently and more minutely subdivided.—Marsden, p. 482.

‡ Called Pao-yng-shien by Sir George Staunton, who observed it scarcely rising above the level of the waters.

the bodies of their dead, and are under the great khan. They are artificers and merchants, have abundance of silk, and make much cloth of it mixed with gold, and thus earn a sufficient livelihood. Through all that country the paper money of the khan is circulated.

When a man sets out from Pau-chym, he travels a day and discovers a very large city named Chaym.* There is great abundance of the necessaries of life; fish beyond measure, beasts and birds for sport in great numbers, so that for a Venetian silver grosso you may purchase three pheasants.

LXV.—Of the City of Tin-gui, and its great Saltworks.

Tin-gui† is a pretty agreeable city, a full day's journey from Chaym. The people are idolaters, subject to the khan, and use paper money; they have merchandise and arts, and numerous ships belonging to them. It lies to the south-east, and on the left, nearly three days' journey to the eastward, is the ocean, where salt is made in great quantities. Here is a city named Cyn-gui, large, rich, and noble, to which all the salt is brought, and the khan draws from it a revenue so wonderful that it could not be believed.‡

LXVI.—Of the great City of Yan-gui.

When a man leaves Tin-gui he proceeds a day towards the south-east,§ through a very fine country, finding

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* Kain, *Ramusio*; Kao-yeou, a considerable town on the banks of the lake of the same name, and reaching also to the canal.

† Mr Marsden (p. 485), imagines this to be Tai-tcheou, a place considerably to the eastward; but there appears no ground for going so far out of the route; besides that the number of vessels seems clearly to fix it as still on the banks of the lake.

‡ Ramusio causes a strange confusion by making Cyn-gui or Chin-gui part of the route, thus breaking up all the distances and directions in the itinerary. The French version here followed quite clears up the difficulty. The saltworks on the ocean, and Cyn-gui, the shipping port, form no part of the route, but are mentioned as important particulars heard of at Tin-gui.

§ The points of the compass, says Mr Marsden, p. 486, must here be strangely perverted. It is only, however, by his own unauthorized excursion to Tai-tcheou, and the errors of Ramu-

towns and castles, and then comes to Yan-gui,* a large and beautiful city, which has under it twenty-four, all good and of great trade. Its affairs are administered by one of the twelve barons of the khan; Messer Marco Polo, of whom this book treats, governed it three years. Here are made many arms and other equipments for knights and men of war; for in this place and around it numerous troops are quartered. I will now tell you of two great provinces lying to the west, and as I shall have much to say, I will begin with Nan-ghin.

LXVII.—Of the great City of Nan-ghin.

Nan-ghin† is a province towards the west, belonging to Manji, and is very noble and rich. The people are idolaters, use paper money, and are subject to the great khan. They live by merchandise and arts, have silk in abundance, and make cloths of it interwoven with gold, in all fashions. They have an ample supply of every kind of grain and provisions; for the land is very fruitful. There are also lions and animals for hunting. There are many rich merchants who carry on much trade, and pay a large revenue to the great sire. But I will now go to the noble city of Sa-yan-fu, respecting which I shall have much to say.

LXVIII.—Of the City of Sa-yan-fu, and how it was taken.

Sa-yan-fu is a large and magnificent city, having under it twelve others also great and noble; it is the seat of many valuable arts and of much merchandize.‡

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sio's version. The route, as we have shown, lay throughout along the eastern shore of the Kao-yeou lake, which, especially in this last part, runs exactly in the direction stated in the text. —(See Du Halde's Map of Kiang-nan.)

* Yang-tcheou-fou, an ancient city still described as large and flourishing, though it has only ten others under it. Le Comte was told it contained two millions of people; doubtless a vast exaggeration.

† Nan-king, a vast city, considered as a rival capital to Peking, and even as containing a larger population. It does not seem in our author's time to have been quite so great, Hang-tcheou-fou being then the chief city of the south.

‡ This is Siang-yang-fou, a large city in Hou-quang, having

The inhabitants are idolaters; they use paper money, are subject to the khan, and burn the bodies of their dead. This city held out three years after all the rest of the province had yielded to the conqueror, who besieged it with a mighty army; but he could approach it only on the side which lies to the north, because it was elsewhere surrounded by a large and deep lake, by which the besieged obtained abundance of provisions. The army was therefore about to abandon the siege in much grief and wrath, and this news was just brought to the khan, when Messeri Nicolo, Maffio, and Marco Polo said,—"we shall find a way by which the city shall be made to surrender." The monarch, who was most eagerly bent on its capture, readily listened. Then said the two brothers and their son Marco,—"Great sire, we have with us in our train men who will make such an engine as will discharge large stones, which the citizens will not be able to endure, and will be obliged to yield." The khan was much rejoiced, and desired that they should execute their plan as soon as possible. Now, they had in their company a German and a Nestorian Christian who were skilful in such works, and made two or three machines sufficient to throw stones of 300 pounds weight. When these were conveyed to the army and set up, they appeared to the Tartars the greatest wonder of the world. They then began discharging stones into the city, which struck the houses, broke and destroyed every thing, and caused the utmost noise and alarm. When the inhabitants saw a calamity such as they had never witnessed before, they knew not what to think or say. They met in council, and concluded that they must be all killed, unless they submitted. They therefore intimated to the lord of the host that they would surrender on the same terms that others had done. This was agreed to, and Sa-yan-fu came under the power of the great khan, through the interposition of Messeri Nicolo, Maffio, and Marco; and it was not

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others under its jurisdiction. The author evidently goes a good deal off his way in order to introduce the achievement of himself and his relatives.

a small service, for this town and province are among the best in his possession, and he draws from them a great revenue.* Now, we shall leave this subject and treat of a city called Sin-gui.

LXIX.—Of the City of Sin-gui and the River Kiang, and the Multitude of Cities on that River.

When a man leaves Yan-gui and goes fifteen miles† south-east, he perceives a certain city named Sin-gui, which is not very extensive, but has great merchandise and much shipping. The people are idolaters, use paper money, and are subject to the khan. That city stands upon a river, named Kiang, which is the largest in the world; being in some places ten miles broad, and upwards of a hundred days' journey in length. Through it the inhabitants have a lucrative trade, which yields a large revenue to the khan. And on account of the many cities on it, the ships navigating and the goods conveyed by means of it are more numerous and valuable than in all the rivers of Christendom and the adjacent seas beside. I tell you I have seen at that city no fewer than 5000 ships sailing at once on its stream.‡ For that river

* The Chinese histories mention this mode in which the city was taken, and that the engineers were persons from Western Asia, but say nothing of the Poli. If, however, as in the French text here followed, they merely pointed out the persons by whom these machines could be constructed, this was a private transaction, which might easily escape the notice of these writers. It were more difficult if, as represented in Ramusio's text, they invented and superintended the whole transaction; but this we have no doubt is a corruption.

† All the editions, except the Paris, make this journey from Sa-yan-fu. Mr Marsden (p. 495) justly observes that this place is far more distant from the Kiang, and insists that the true reading must be *days*. He even asserts that this is supported by Ramusio and the Museum Italian MS.; but it is odd that he is mistaken in both points, being misled in the last by the very obscure handwriting. The French edition, I apprehend, again lets us into the real state of the case, by making the departure from An-gui (Yang-tcheou-fou). The descriptions of Nan-king and Siang-yang form no part of the itinerary, but are extraneous objects introduced on account of their great importance. The traveller is supposed to have been all the while at Yang-tcheou, and thence to continue his route.

‡ Strong as these expressions are, they scarcely exceed those

flows through sixteen provinces, and has more than two hundred great towns on its banks. The ships are covered, and have only one mast; yet they are of heavy burden, and carry each from 4000 to 12,000 cantars. They have ropes composed of cane for drawing them through the water; those belonging to the larger vessels are thick, and fifteen paces in length, being cloven at the end, and bound together in such a way as to make a cord 300 paces long.

LXX.—Of the City of Cai-gui.

Cai-gui is a small city towards the south-east,* situated upon the bank of the above-mentioned river; all the people are idolaters, subject to the khan, and use paper money. Here are collected large quantities of corn and rice; and there is a passage by water to the city of Kambalu and the court of the khan; grain from this place forms a considerable part of the provision required by his court. The monarch made this communication by digging long and deep canals from one river to another, and from lake to lake, so that a large ship may pass through. And by the side of this water-channel goes a road, so

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used by the most sober modern travellers, on viewing the immense multitude of vessels upon this mighty river, which is evidently the Kiang or Yang-tse-kiang, the greatest in the empire.

* There is some intricacy here. Mr Marsden (p. 498) places Cai-gui on the southern bank; but to support this, he has altered the text even of Ramusio, which merely states that it lay to the south-east (we apprehend of Yang-tcheou). Both the Paris editions, after describing it, say, "Now, let us cross the river." This plainly implies that it was on the northern bank, which is corroborated by its being the key of the communication along the canal with Pe-king. I have no doubt it is Qua-tcheou or Koua-tcheou, a large and flourishing place, though not of the first magnitude, and in the precise situation indicated. There remains some difficulty as to Sin-gui. My impression is, that it is the place mistaken by Mr Marsden for Cai-gui, viz. a suburb of Tching-kiang-fou, lying on the river, yet described as at some distance from the main body of the place (see Le Comte in Astley, vol. iii. p. 522). In this case, the route of fifteen miles must have crossed the river to Sin-gui, and then returned to take a view of Cai-gui. In fact, the French edition, after describing Sin-gui, says, "Now let us *return* to Cai-gui."

that you may take either the one or the other, as is most convenient. In the middle of that river, opposite the city, is an isle of rocks, on which is a monastery of idolaters, where there are 200 monks, who serve a very great number of gods. Now, let us cross the river, and tell of a city named Cin-ghian-fu.*

LXXI.—Of the City of Cin-ghian-fu.

Cin-ghian-fu is a city of Manji, and the people are such as we have already described, idolaters, and subjects of the great khan. They are artificers, merchants, and hunters, raise much grain, and make cloths of silk and gold. Here are two churches of Nestorian Christians, formed in the year 1278 ; which happened because at that time the governor under the khan was a Nestorian, named Marsarchis, and he caused these two edifices to be built. Now, let us go to the great city of Cin-ghin-gui.

LXXII.—Of the City of Cin-ghin-gui, and of a dreadful Slaughter.

When a man leaves Cin-ghian-fu, and travels three or four days south-east, he always discovers cities and castles, with much merchandise ; the people are all idolaters, subject to the khan, and use paper money. Then he comes to the city of Cin-ghin-gui† great and noble, the people idolaters, and subject to the khan ; they have abundance of provisions, produce and manufacture a vast quantity of silk. And here I will tell you a wicked thing which the people of this city did, but it cost them dear. When Bayam, called the chief of the Hundred Eyes, conquered all the province, and took the capital itself, he sent a body of troops to reduce this place. It surrendered, and the soldiers entered and found such good wine, that they drank till they were intoxicated, and became quite insensible. When the men of the

* This seems to be the main body of the city Tching-kiang-fou, and therefore treated as an inland city. The proximity of all the three places last named seems proved by no distance being stated between them.

† Tchang-tcheou-fou, near the line of the canal, a large and flourishing city.

city saw them in this condition, that very night they slew them all, so that not one escaped. When Bayam the commander heard of this disloyal conduct, he sent an army who took the town, and put all the inhabitants to the sword. Now, let us go on, and I will tell you of another named Sin-gui.

LXXIII.—Of the City of Sin-gui, of Un-gui, and of Ughim.

Sin-gui is a very great and noble city. The people are idolaters, subject to the great khan, and use paper money. Most of them live by merchandise and arts, raise much silk, make cloths of it interwoven with gold very costly and fine. The town is forty miles in circuit, and the number of inhabitants is so great, that no person can count them, and if they were men-at-arms, those of the province of Manji would conquer the whole world; they are not so, however, but prudent merchants, and, as already observed, skilful in all the arts. They have also many persons learned in natural science, good physicians, and able philosophers. The city has 1600 stone bridges under which a galley might pass; and in the mountains adjacent grow rhubarb and ginger in such abundance, that for a Venetian grosso you may buy forty pounds of the latter, fresh and good. Sin-gui has under it sixteen large cities of arts and trade. Its name signifies the earth, and another large town near it is called heaven, and these appellations they derive from their great nobleness.* Now, let us depart from this place, and I will tell you of another city called Un-gui.† It is a day's journey from Sin-gui, and is large and good, with merchandise and arts; but there is nothing so remarkable about it as to be worth describing; therefore we shall go on to delineate another called Ughim.

* This is Sou-tcheou-fou, which all travellers unite with our author in describing as one of the largest and most beautiful cities of the empire. It seems, indeed, to have improved in modern times, and now in gayety and splendour to eclipse Hang-tcheou-fou, since the latter ceased to be a seat of empire.

† Mr Marsden (p. 508) thinks this Kia-hing a town on the canal between the two great cities. Ramusio calls it Va-giu.

It is great and rich; the men are idolaters, subject to the great khan, use paper money, and have abundance of all things. There is nothing else worth mentioning; therefore I will go on to tell you of the noble city of Kin-sai, which is the capital of the kingdom of Manji.

LXXIV.—Of the most noble and wonderful City of Kin-sai; and of its Population, Trades, Lake, Villas, and splendid Palace.

When a man leaves Ughim, and goes three days, he observes many noble and rich cities and castles, with great merchandise. The people are all idolaters, subject to the khan, use paper money, and have abundant means of subsistence. At the end of these three days, he finds a very noble city named Kin-sai,* which means in our language the city of heaven. And now I will tell you all its nobleness; for without doubt it is the largest city in the world. And I will give you the account which was written by the Queen of Manji to Bayam, who conquered that kingdom, to be transmitted to his master, who thereby might be persuaded not to destroy it. And this letter contained the truth, as I Marco saw with my own eyes.† It related, that the city of Kin-sai is 100 miles in circumference, and has 12,000 stone bridges; and beneath the greater part of these a large ship might pass, and beneath the others a smaller one. And you need not wonder there are so many bridges; because the city is wholly on the water, and surrounded by it like

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* This is undoubtedly Hang-tcheou-fou. The term here used means capital city.

† This letter of the queen is found only in the French edition. The Paris Latin and the Crusca make it the king; but, besides their inferior authority, that prince had fled before Bayam came up. Perhaps it was a mistake in translating the French *roine*. There is nothing of the kind in any other edition except Ramusio's, where it is said that Marco made notes of every particular; but we have already intimated strong scepticism as to the existence of any such documents. The description, therefore, not being by our traveller himself, may form some excuse for its exaggerations. He guarantees it, indeed; but this can only mean that he saw all the objects to be on an immense scale, as they really were.

Venice. It contains twelve arts or trades, and each trade has 12,000 stations or houses; and in each station there are of masters and labourers at least ten, in some fifteen, thirty, and even forty, because this town supplies many others round it. The merchants are so numerous and so rich, that their wealth can neither be told nor believed. They, their ladies, and the heads of the trades do nothing with their own hands, but live as cleanly and delicately as if they were kings. These females also are of angelic beauty, and live in the most elegant manner. But it is established that no one can practise any other art than that which his father followed, even though he were worth 100,000 bezants. To the south of that city is a lake, full thirty miles in circuit; and all around it are beautiful palaces and houses, so wonderfully built that nothing can possibly surpass them; they belong to the great and noble men of the city. There are also abbeys and monasteries of idolaters in great numbers. In the middle of the lake are two islands, on one of which stands a palace, so wonderfully adorned that it seems worthy of belonging to the emperor. Whoever wishes to celebrate a marriage or other festival, goes thither, where he finds dishes, plates, and all implements necessary for the occasion. The city of Kin-sai contains many beautiful houses, and one great stone tower, to which the people convey all their property when the houses take fire, as often happens, because many of them are of wood. They are idolaters, subject to the great khan, and use paper money. They eat the flesh of dogs and other beasts, such as no Christian would touch for the world. On each of the said 12,000 bridges, ten men keep guard day and night, so that no one may dare to raise a disturbance, or commit theft or homicide. I will tell you another thing, that in the middle of the city is a mound, on which stands a tower, wherein is placed a wooden table, against which a man strikes with a hammer, so that it is heard to a great distance; this he does when there is an alarm of fire, or any kind of danger or disturbance. The great khan

causes that city to be most strongly guarded, because it is the capital of all the province of Manji, and he derives from it vast treasure and revenue; he is likewise afraid of any revolt. All the streets are paved with stones and bricks; and so are the high roads of Manji, on which account men may travel very pleasantly either on horse-back or on foot. In this city, too, are 4000 baths, in which the citizens, both men and women, take great delight, and frequently resort thither, because they keep their persons very cleanly. They are the largest and most beautiful baths in the world, insomuch that 100 of either sex may bathe in them at once. Twenty-five miles from thence is the ocean, between south and east; and there is a city named Gan-fu,* which has a very fine port, with large ships, and much merchandise of immense value from India and other quarters. Past this city to the port flows a stately river, by which the ships can come up to it, and which runs thither from a great distance. The khan has divided the whole province of Manji into nine large kingdoms, all of which pay him annual tribute. In Gan-fu resides one of the kings, who has under him 140 cities. I will tell you a thing you will much wonder at, that in this province there are 1200 towns, and in each a garrison amounting to 1000, 10,000, 20,000, and in some instances to 30,000 men. But do not suppose these are all Tartar cavalry; for part are infantry and sent from Cathay. But the riches and profit which the khan derives from the province of Manji is so great that no man could dare to mention it, nor would any one believe him; and therefore I shall be silent. I will tell you, however, some of the customs of Manji. One is, that whenever a boy or girl is born, the day, hour, and minute are written down, also the sign and planet under which the birth takes place, so that all may know their nativity. And when any one

* This is undoubtedly Ning-po, near the mouth of the river on which Hang-tcheou-fou stands, and opposite to the Tchu-san islands. It and Amoy are the two chief seats of foreign trade on the eastern coast of China.

wishes to undertake a journey, or do any thing else of importance, he repairs to the astrologer, states these particulars, and asks if he should go or act otherwise. And they are often thus diverted from their journeys and other designs; for these astrologers are skilful in their arts and diabolical enchantments, and tell them many things which they implicitly believe. Another custom is, that when a body is to be burned, all the relations dress themselves in canvass to express grief, and go with the corpse, beating instruments, and making songs and prayers to their idols. When they come to the place where the ceremony is to be performed, they frame images of men, women, camels, horses, clothes, money, and various other things, all of cards. When the fire is fully lighted, they throw in all these things, saying that the dead will enjoy them in the other world, and that the honour now done to him will be done there also by idols. In this city of Kin-sai is a palace of the king who fled, which is the noblest and most beautiful in the world. It is a square, ten miles in circuit, surrounded by a lofty wall, within which are gardens abounding in all the most delicate fruits, fountains, and lakes supplied with many kinds of fish. In the middle is the edifice itself, large and beautiful, with a hall so extensive that a vast number of persons can sit down at table. That hall is painted all over with gold and azure, representing many stories, in which are beasts, birds, knights, ladies, and various wonders. Nothing can be seen upon the walls and roof but these ornaments. There are twenty others of similar dimensions, such that 10,000 men can conveniently sit at table; and they are covered and worked in gold very nobly. This palace contains also 1000 chambers. In the city are 160 toman of fires, that is, of houses; and the toman is 10,000, making 1,600,000 houses,* among which

* This statement, allowing five inhabitants to a house, would make 8,000,000, which must, no doubt, be a great exaggeration. We are to consider, however, that Hang-tcheou-fou is represented even now as little inferior to Pe-king, which it much surpasses in industry and commerce,—and that it was then, in addition, the seat of the most splendid court in the East. Probably,

are many great and rich palaces. There is only one church of Nestorian Christians. Each man of that city, as also of the others, has written on his door the name of his wife, his children, of his sons' wives, his slaves, and of all his household; and when any one is born, he adds the name, and when he dies, takes it away. Thus the governor of each city knows the names of every person in it; and this practice is followed in all the towns of Manji and Cathay. The same account is given of the strangers who reside for a time in their houses, both when they come and when they go; and by that means the great khan knows whoever arrives and departs, which is of great advantage.*

LXXV.—Farther Particulars of that City.

There are within the city ten principal squares or market-places,† besides which, numberless shops run along the streets. These squares are each half a mile in length, and have in front the main street, forty paces wide, and reaching in a straight line from one end of the city to the other. Thus they are, altogether, two miles in circuit, and four miles distant from each other. The street is crossed by many low and convenient bridges. Parallel to it, but on the opposite side to the squares, is a very large canal, and on its bank capacious warehouses, built of stone, to accommodate the

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therefore, it was the greatest city that ever existed, and contained not much fewer than half the number now stated. The printed edition of Pipino has only 1,060,000 houses; but, as it gives the same number of tomans with the others, this appears an error of the press; and it is otherwise in the MS. The Basle edition has only 600,000; but it cannot be received against all the others.

* Mr Marsden mentions having been informed by Mr Reeves of Canton that this arrangement is still practised.

† The additional matter in Ramusio relating to Kin-sai being particularly copious, it has been thought advisable to collect it into one chapter, so that the reader may see it distinct from that included in the early editions, and which forms the preceding chapter. At the end, some inquiry will be made whether it really was written by the traveller himself. Meantime, it may be observed, that there is no reason to doubt the information being generally authentic.

merchants from India and other countries, and receive their goods; this situation being chosen as convenient with regard to the market-squares. Each of these, on three days in every week, contains an assemblage of from 40,000 to 50,000 persons, who bring for sale every desirable article of provision. There appears abundance of all kinds of game, roebucks, stags, fallow-deer, hares, and rabbits, with partridges, pheasants, francolins, quails, common fowls, capons, ducks and geese almost innumerable; these last being so easily bred on the lake, that for a Venetian silver grosso you may buy a couple of geese and two pairs of ducks. In the same place are also the shambles, where cattle, as oxen, calves, kids, and lambs, are killed for the tables of the rich and of magistrates. These markets afford at all seasons a great variety of herbs and fruits; in particular, uncommonly large pears, weighing each ten pounds,* white in the inside like paste, and very fragrant. The peaches also, both yellow and white, are in their season of delicious flavour. Grapes are not cultivated, but very good ones are brought dried from other districts. Wine is not esteemed by the natives, who are accustomed to their own liquor, prepared from rice and various spices. From the sea, twenty-five miles distant, a vast supply of fish is conveyed on the river; and the lake also contains abundance, the taking of which affords constant employment to numerous fishermen. The species vary according to the season, and the offal carried thither from the city renders them large and rich. In short, the quantity in the market is so immense, that you would think it impossible it could find purchasers; yet in a few hours it is all disposed of, so many inhabitants are there who can afford to indulge in such luxuries. They eat fish and flesh at one meal. Each of the ten squares is surrounded with lofty dwelling-houses; the lower part being made into shops, where manufactures of every kind are carried on, and imported

* Mr Marsden (p. 157) quotes authorities in favour of this enormous size, particularly Van Braam, who was served with one 15 inches long and 14 thick.

articles are sold, as spices, drugs, toys, and pearls. In some shops is kept only the country wine, which is constantly made fresh, and served out at a moderate price. In the several streets connected with the squares are numerous baths, attended by servants of both sexes, to perform the functions of ablution for the male and female visiters, who from their childhood are accustomed to bathe in cold water, as being highly conducive to health. Here, too, are apartments provided with warm water for the use of strangers, who, from want of use, cannot endure the shock of the cold. All are in the daily habit of washing their persons, especially before meals.

In other streets reside the females of bad character, who are extremely numerous; and not only in the streets near the squares, which are specially appropriated to them, but in every other quarter they appear, highly dressed out and perfumed, in well furnished houses, and with a train of domestics. They are perfectly skilled in all the arts of seduction, which they can adapt to persons of every description; so that strangers who have once yielded to their fascination are said to be like men bewitched, and can never get rid of the impression. Intoxicated with these unlawful pleasures, even after returning home, they always long to revisit the place where they were thus seduced. In other streets reside the physicians and the astrologers, who also teach reading and writing, with many other arts. On opposite sides of the squares are two large edifices, where officers appointed by his majesty promptly decide any differences that arise between the foreign merchants and the inhabitants. They are bound also to take care that the guards be duly stationed on the neighbouring bridges, and in case of neglect, to inflict a discretionary punishment on the delinquent.

On each side of the principal street, mentioned as reaching across the whole city, are large houses and mansions with gardens; near to which are the abodes and shops of the working artisans. At all hours you observe such multitudes of people passing backwards and

forwards on their various avocations, that it might seem impossible to supply them with food. A different judgment will, however, be formed, when every market-day the squares are seen crowded with people, and covered with provisions brought in for sale by carts and boats. To give some idea of the quantity of meat, wine, spices, and other articles brought for the consumption of the people of Kin-sai, I shall instance the single article of pepper. Marco Polo was informed by an officer employed in the customs, that the daily amount was forty-three loads, each weighing 243 pounds.

The houses of the citizens are well built, and richly adorned with carving, in which, as well as in painting and ornamental buildings, they take great delight, and lavish enormous sums. Their natural disposition is pacific, and the example of their former unwarlike kings has accustomed them to live in tranquillity. They keep no arms in their houses, and are unacquainted with their use. Their mercantile transactions are conducted in a manner perfectly upright and honourable. They also behave in a friendly manner to each other, so that the inhabitants of the same neighbourhood appear like one family. In their domestic relations, they show no jealousy or suspicion of their wives, but treat them with great respect. Any one would be held as infamous that should address indecent expressions to married women. They behave with cordiality to strangers who visit the city for commercial purposes, hospitably entertain them, and afford their best assistance in their business. On the other hand, they hate the very sight of soldiers, even the guards of the great khan; recollecting, that by their means they have been deprived of the government of their native sovereigns.

On the lake above mentioned are a number of pleasure-barges, capable of holding from ten to twenty persons, being from fifteen to twenty paces long, with a broad level floor, and moving steadily through the water. Those who delight in this amusement, and propose to enjoy it, either with their ladies or companions, engage

one of these barges, which they find always in the very best order, with seats, tables, and every thing necessary for an entertainment. The boatmen sit on a flat upper deck, and with long poles reaching to the bottom of the lake, not more than two fathoms deep, push along the vessels to any desired spot. These cabins are painted in various colours, and with many figures; the exterior is similarly adorned. On each side are windows, which can at pleasure be kept open or shut, when the company seated at table may delight their eyes with the varied beauty of the passing scenes. Indeed, the gratification derived from these water-excursions exceeds any that can be enjoyed on land; for as the lake extends all along the city, you discover, while standing in the boat, at a certain distance from the shore, all its grandeur and beauty, palaces, temples, convents, and gardens, while lofty trees reach down to the water's edge. At the same time are seen other boats continually passing, similarly filled with parties of pleasure. Generally, indeed, the inhabitants, when they have finished the labours of the day, or closed their mercantile transactions, think only of seeking amusement with their wives or mistresses, either in these barges or driving about the city in carriages. The main street already mentioned is paved with stone and brick to the width of ten paces on each side, the interval being filled up with small gravel, and having arched drains to carry off the water into the canals, so that it is always kept dry. On this road the carriages are constantly driving. They are long, covered at top, have curtains and cushions of silk, and can hold six persons. Citizens of both sexes, desirous of this amusement, hire them for that purpose, and you see them at every hour moving about in vast numbers. In many cases the people visit gardens, where they are introduced by the managers of the place into shady arbours, and remain till the time of returning home.

The palace already mentioned had a wall with a passage dividing the exterior court from an inner one, which formed a kind of cloister, supporting a portico

that surrounded it, and led to various royal apartments. Hence you entered a covered passage or corridor, six paces wide, and so long as to reach to the margin of the lake. On each side were corresponding entrances to ten courts, also resembling cloisters with porticos, and each having fifty private rooms, with gardens attached,—the residence of a thousand young females, whom the king maintained in his service. In the company either of his queen or of a party of those ladies he used to seek amusement on the lake, visiting the idol-temples on its banks. The other two portions of this seraglio were laid out in groves, pieces of water, beautiful orchards, and enclosures for animals suited for the chase, as antelopes, deer, stags, hares, and rabbits. Here, too, the king amused himself,—his damsels accompanying him in carriages or on horseback. No man was allowed to be of the party, but the females were skilled in the art of coursing and pursuing the animals. When fatigued they retired into the groves on the margin of the lake, and, quitting their dresses, rushed into the water, when they swam sportively in different directions,—the king remaining a spectator of the exhibition. Sometimes he had his repast provided beneath the dense foliage of one of these groves, and was there waited upon by the damsels. Thus he spent his time in this enervating society, profoundly ignorant of martial affairs; hence the grand khan, as already mentioned, was enabled to deprive him of his splendid possessions, and drive him with ignominy from his throne. All these particulars were related to me by a rich merchant of Kin-sai, who was then very old; and, having been a confidential servant of King Facfur, was acquainted with every circumstance of his life. He knew the palace in its former splendour, and desired me to come and take a view of it. Being then the residence of the khan's viceroy, the colonnades were preserved entire, but the chambers had been allowed to go to ruin,—only their foundations remaining visible. The walls, too, including the parks

and gardens, had been left to decay, and no longer contained any trees or animals.*

LXXVI.—Revenues of the Great Khan from Kin-sai and Manji.

I will now tell you of the large revenue which the khan draws from this city, and the territory under its jurisdiction, which is the ninth part of the province of Manji. The salt of that country yields to him in the year eighty tomans of gold, and each toman is 70,000 saiks, which amount to 5,600,000, and each saik is worth more than a gold florin; and is not this most great and wonderful! In that country, too, there grows more sugar than in the whole world besides, and it yields a very large revenue. I will not state it particularly, but remark that, taking all spices together,

* At the close of this large mass of information, the curious question arises, whether we are really indebted for it to the traveller himself. I have already noticed the complete contrast between the character of the king here given and that found in Chapter LXII., which is sanctioned by all the editions. We may observe, also, that the *present* tense, used in the early versions to describe the palace, evidently as in full splendour, is here changed to the *past*, and only part is represented in repair, the rest being allowed to go to ruin. Yet Marco's visit there could be only a few years after the conquest, when so great a change would have been very improbable. This half-stealthy mode of visiting it with an old merchant of Kin-sai seems to accord very ill with his official situation, which would have opened to him regular access. He would doubtless, indeed, visit the governor, and probably be accommodated within the edifice. The hatred of the Chinese towards the Tartar guards, though probably true, would not we think have been mentioned by him. On the whole, we feel persuaded that he had no concern with any of these passages, and that they were inserted by some private traveller, who visited the city at a considerably later period. There is no doubt it was one who had good opportunities of observation; indeed, his character of the king accords better with Chinese history than that of Marco's, who, as formerly observed, had been somehow biassed on this subject. Former insertions seemed to bear the marks of a churchman; but this, we think, comes from a merchant,—a peculiarly copious detail being given both of the transactions and social habits of that class. We know not even if there be elsewhere so full an account of the mode of spending life among the most opulent class of the Chinese.

they pay $3\frac{1}{3}$ per cent., which is levied too on all other merchandise. Large taxes are also derived from wine, rice, coal, and from the twelve arts, which, as already mentioned, have each twelve thousand stations. On every thing a duty is imposed; and on silk especially and other articles is paid ten per cent. But I, Marco Polo, tell you, because I have often heard the account of it, that the revenue on all these commodities amounts every year to 210 tomans, or 14,700,000 saiks, and that is the most enormous amount of money that ever was heard of, and yet is paid by only the ninth part of the province of Manji.* Now let us depart from this city of Kin-sai, and go to another called Tam-pin-gui.

LXXVII.—Tam-pin-gui and other Cities.

When a man departs from Kin-sai, and goes a day to the south-east, he finds always most pleasant houses and gardens, and all the means of living in great abundance. At the end of the day he discovers the city already named,† which is very large and beautiful, and is dependent on Kin-sai. The people are subject to the khan, use paper money, are idolaters, and burn the bodies of their dead in the manner already described. They live by merchandise and arts, and have an ample supply of provisions. And when a man goes three days to the south-east, seeing very large

* The florin being estimated by Mr Marsden at ten shillings sterling, this makes £7,350,000. Both Du Halde and Macartney reckon the present amount at about £66,000,000 (Account of China, Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. ii. p. 183); and as the southern provinces are much the most productive, and Kin-sai doubtless superior to any other, there appears no very great exaggeration. The amazement with which the traveller is struck, and which was equally felt in Europe, may be understood, when we consider that the revenues of its greatest princes were in that age very slender, perhaps in few cases amounting to a million sterling.

† Mr Marsden is unable to find a city on this site, and I cannot concur with Count Boni in thinking it Fu-yang, which is much more than a day's journey from the capital. The Jesuits' map has the mark of a town at the proper place, but without any name.

cities and castles, and much trade, he comes to the city of Un-gui,* under the government of Kin-sai, and otherwise like the former. When he departs from Un-gui and goes two days south-east, he every where perceives towns and castles, so that he seems to be going through a city. Every thing is in abundance; and here are the largest and longest canes in all the country, for know that some are four palms in circuit and fifteen paces long.† At the end of the two days he comes to Chen-gui,‡ which is large and beautiful. The people, who are idolaters, are under the great khan and the jurisdiction of Kin-sai, and have abundance of silk and provisions. In going four days south-east he finds cities and castles, and all things in the utmost plenty. There are birds and beasts for the chase, with lions very large and fierce. Throughout all the province of Manji there are neither sheep nor lambs, but oxen, goats, and hogs in great variety. At the end of the four days he finds Cian-cian,§ a town situated on a mountain, which divides the river into two parts, each flowing in a different direction. The people are like the former; and, at the end of three days more we reach the city of Can-giu,|| large and beautiful; and

* U-guiu, *Ramusio.* Mr Marsden, again at a loss, suggests Hou-tcheou, at which the Count justly wonders, it being in the completely opposite direction; but I am convinced that this is Fu-yang.

† Martini and Du Halde agree as to the luxuriance of the canes which grow in Tche-kiang. Marsden, p. 548. Boni, vol. ii. p. 344.

‡ Gen-gui, *Ramusio.* Mr Marsden thinks it Tchu-ki; but it appears to me clearly Yen-tcheou-fou. Both the name and position closely agree. Further remarks will be made in the next note.

§ Zen-gian, *Ramusio.* Mr Marsden considers it clear that this is Yen-tcheou-fou. We would observe, however, that ten days have been spent in coming from the capital,—a distance on this supposition of only seventy miles. On the other hand, the journey hence to Kien-ning-fou is about 220 miles, yet occupies only nine days. If we are to attach any credit then to our traveller's statements, this place must be Kiu-tcheou, which the French name resembles, and *Z* in the Venetian dialect is identical with *G* or *K*.

|| Gie-za, *Ramusio.* This, I apprehend, must be one of the frontier-places between Kiu-tcheou and Fo-kien; perhaps Kiang-

this is the last under the jurisdiction of Kin-sai; for now commences another kingdom, which is one of the nine parts of Manji, and is called Fu-gui.

LXXVIII.—The Kingdom of Fu-gui.

When a man goes from the last-mentioned city of Kin sai he enters the kingdom of Fu-gui;* and, after travelling seven days, he finds houses and villages, the inhabitants of which are all idolaters, and under the jurisdiction of Fu-gui. They have provisions in great abundance, with numerous wild beasts for hunting; also large and fierce lions. They have ample supplies of ginger and galanga, so that for a Venetian grosso you can buy eighty pounds. And there is a fruit or flower having the appearance of saffron, and though not really so, yet of equal value, being much employed in manufacture. They eat the flesh of the filthiest animals, and even that of a man, provided he has not died a natural death; but if he has been killed, they account his flesh extremely delicate. When they go to war they cut their hair very close, and paint their faces an azure colour like the iron of a lance. They fight all on foot except their chief; and are the most cruel race in the world, because they go about the whole day killing men, drinking their blood, and eating their flesh.†

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chan-fui, which much resembles the French name. Mr Marsden maintains that it must be Kiu-tcheou itself, as being a frontier-city; but he forgets that it borders on Kiang-see; while Fo-kien is the province now to be entered.

* This is the French name and the most correct, while Ramusio has Concha; and it is curious that the former version gives it that name in a subsequent chapter.

† Mr Marsden is appalled at the mention of such a people in the most civilized part of China, and has recourse to his favourite hypothesis of a transposition of notes, causing to be applied to them what was true only of certain tribes of Sumatra. He does not seem aware that some parts of Fo-kien rank with the rudest portions of the empire, in whose weakened state it was not unlikely that such races might still find harbour there. We shall soon see how difficult even Kublai found it to keep them in subjection. They still bear a rude, bold, independent character, quite unlike that of the other Chinese (Account of China, Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. ii. pp. 368, 369). The

LXXIX.—Of the Cities of Que-lin-fu and Un-quem.

In the middle of these seven days you come to a city called Que-lin-fu,* which is very large and beautiful, subject to the great khan. It has three bridges, the largest and most magnificent in the world; for each is a mile long and ten paces broad, and all supported by columns of marble. The people live by merchandise and arts, and have abundance of silk and ginger. The ladies here are very beautiful. They have another strange thing, hens that have no feathers, but skins like a cat.† They lay eggs like those of our hens, and are very good eating. And in the remainder of the seven days' journey we discover many cities and castles, merchants and merchandise, and men of art. There are lions, great and fierce, doing much injury to the passengers, who on this account cannot travel without imminent danger. At the end of the journey is found a city called Un-quem,‡ where there is made such a quantity of sugar, that the whole court of the khan is thence supplied, which is worth a vast treasure. Beyond it is the large city of Fu-gui, capital of this kingdom.

LXXX.—Of the City of Fu-gui.

Fu-gui,§ as just stated, is the capital of the kingdom of

asserted cannibalism was probably an exaggeration, suggested by the fears of the people.

* Kien-ning-fou, on the river Min, which Martini describes as equal in magnitude to the capital, though much injured during the recent wars. He notices, too, its magnificent bridges.

† It has been impossible to find any confirmation of this account; though Du Halde mentions a small species in Se-tchuen (probably the same) with a woolly covering similar to that of sheep.

‡ Commentators have not been able to find this city. Ming-tsing agrees very exactly as to site, and we imagine must be the place, though there is no resemblance of name.

§ Instead of this Ramusio has Kan-giu, which, as our traveller's *giu* corresponds with *tcheou*, is just the Chinese name for Canton, thus strangely confounded with Fou-tcheou-fou. I have no doubt it is a gross modern interpolation, after the Portuguese had brought the former place strongly to the view of Europeans. Some one then thought it would improve the

Con-cha, which is one of the nine parts of Manji. In that city is much merchandise and art; the people are idolatrous, and subject to the great khan. He keeps there a strong army, because the towns and castles often revolt, and whenever they do so the troops hasten thither, take and destroy them. Through the middle of that city flows a river a mile broad; here much sugar is made, and an extensive trade is carried on in precious stones and pearls, which are brought by merchants from India and its isles. It is also near the port of Zai-tun on the ocean, whither come many ships from Hindostan with much merchandise; and they ascend by the great river to Fu-gui. The people have abundance of all things necessary for subsistence; fine gardens, with good fruit; and the city is wonderfully well ordered in all respects. But we will now go on to other matters.

LXXXI.—Of the most noble Port of Zai-tun, and of Ti-min-gui.

When one departs from Fu-gui, passes the river, and goes five days south-east, he finds cities and castles, where there is abundance of all things, woods, birds, and beasts, with the tree which bears camphor. The people are all idolaters, under the great khan and the jurisdiction of Fu-gui. At the end of the five days he finds a city called Zai-tun,* which is a noble port, where all the ships of India arrive, and for one laden with pepper which comes from Alexandria to be sold throughout Christendom, there go to that city a hundred. It is one of the two best ports in the world, and the most frequented by merchants and merchandise. Know, too,

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work to insert it, not aware that he was placing it 500 miles from its real position. I cannot but wonder that Mr Marsden should attempt any defence of such a reading. He urges that Canton was unknown for 200 years after the narrative was written; but it was well known at least 50 years before Ramusio's edition, which alone contains this reading. The description here given of Fou-tcheou-fou, the capital of Fo-kien, appears perfectly correct.

* We agree with Mr Marsden in thinking Zai-tun to be the celebrated port of Amoy, still one of the most considerable in the empire.

that the khan draws thence a large revenue, because all the ships from India pay upon their several kinds of goods, stones, and pearls, ten per cent., that is one in ten. The ships take for their freight, on small merchandise, thirty per cent.; on pepper, forty-four; on lignum, aloes, sandalwood, and other bulky articles, forty; so that merchants, between the freight and the duty, pay a full half of all commodities brought into that port. Those of this country are all idolaters, and have great abundance of every thing necessary for the human body. In that province is a city, named Ti-min-gui,* where they make the most beautiful cups in the world; they are of porcelain, and are manufactured in no other part of the earth besides that city; for a Venetian grosso you may purchase three cups of this most elegant ware. The people of Fu-gui have a language of their own. Now, I have told you of this kingdom, which is one of the nine, and the great khan draws from it as much duty and revenue as from that of Kin-sai. We have not told you of the nine kingdoms of Manji, but only of three, Manji, Kin-sai, and Fu-gui, and of these you have heard fully; but the others I cannot now describe, because it would be too tedious, and our book has not yet treated of other things which I wish to write about; for I have to tell you of the Indians, who are well worthy of being known. Their country contains many wonderful things found in none of the other parts of the world, which it will be good and profitable to write. And, I assure you, Marco remained so long in

* Mr Marsden and Count Boni consider this to be Ting-tcheou, a large city in the upper part of Fo-kien, though it is known that the manufacture, in a fine shape, is now wholly confined to King-te-tching, in Kiang-see. The former imagines that it may have been transferred from the one place to the other, through the exhaustion of materials. To myself there appears no doubt that the place alluded to is no other than King-te-tching itself. The names greatly resemble; and though not in Fo-kien, it is on the immediate border. The traveller, writing from hearsay, could not be expected to be rigidly accurate as to such a point; nor is it even certain if the limits of the provinces were then exactly what they now are.

India, and saw so much of its produce, customs, and merchandise, that no man could better tell the truth. Therefore I will put them in writing, precisely as Messer Marco truly said them to me.*

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* This second introduction of himself by Rusticians exists only in the French edition. Even the Crusca condenses the whole into one sentence, beginning, " I, Marco Polo," &c. Ramusio somewhat expands it, but still showing only the traveller himself in the third person. I have inserted it, however, being inclined to consider it genuine. Ramusio speaks of a sea-chart of the coasts of India, of which no mention occurs in any other edition. This account of India will form the third part of the present volume.

PART II.

Central Asia.

Description of Armenia and Turcomania—Georgia; the Iron Gate—The Caspian—Kingdom of Mosul—Bagdad; its Siege and Capture—Tauris—Report of Miraculous Events—Description of Persia—Yezd and Kerman—Journey to Ormuz—Daring Robbers—Description and Trade of Ormuz—Journey to Khorasan—Alaodin, the Old Man of the Mountain—His feigned Paradise—Assassinations—Subdued by the Tartars—Journey to Balkh—To Badakshan—Mines of Ruby and Lapis Lazuli—Peshawer—Cashmere—Source of the Oxus in Lake Sir-i-kol—Plain of Pamir, called the Roof of the World—Extreme Cold—Kirghizes and other rude Tribes—Cashgar—Samarcand—Yarcund—Khoten—Pein—Ornamental Stones—Lop—Frightful Passage of the Great Desert—Kingdom of Tangut; Manners and Superstitions—Great Caravan Station at Kamul; strange Customs—Sou-tcheou—Kan-tcheou or Campion—Journey to Ezina and Karakorum—Rise of the Empire of Gengis—Manners, Customs, and Superstitions of the Tartars—Their Government—Conduct of their Wars—Route through Siberia to the Northern Ocean—Various Places on the Frontier of China—The Yak, the Musk Animal, and beautiful Pheasants—Country of Prester John—Imperial Hunting Palaces.

I.—On Armenia the Lesser.

You must know there are two Armenias, a great and a lesser one, which last has a king who rules with pure justice, and is subject to the Tartars. This region* contains many cities and castles, and abundance of all things, with beasts and birds for hunting and hawking;

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* This little kingdom, nearly coinciding with the pashalic of Adana, was formed in the 12th century, under the reign of Alexis Comnenus, by an Armenian lord named Kaghic, whose posterity reigned two centuries.—Marsden, p. 42.

but I must tell you the air is not very healthy. The gentry used formerly to be valiant and good at arms; but now they are mean and vile, and remarkable only for being hard drinkers. On the seacoast is a city named Laias,* which carries on a very great trade; for thither all the spices, rich cloths, and other precious articles, are brought from India across the Euphrates, which the merchants of Venice, of Pisa, and of Genoa, come to purchase. By this town we enter the province of Turcomania.

II.—On Turcomania.

In Turcomania† are three distinct races of men:—The Turcomans adore Mohammed, and are simple people, speaking a very rude language. They live amid mountains and valleys where there is good pasturage for cattle, by which they subsist; and I assure you that they rear excellent horses and mules of great value. The two others are Armenians and Greeks, who dwell mingled in cities, and subsist by merchandise and manufactures; they work carpets and crimson silk, the richest and most beautiful in the whole world. They have many towns, of which the principal are Como, Casserie, and Sevasto.‡ They are subject to the Eastern Tartars. Now, let us leave them, and speak of Armenia the Greater.

III.—On Armenia the Greater.

Armenia the Greater§ is a large country, and, at the entrance of it is a city called Arzinga, in which is made the best buckram in the world. There are several baths of warm spring water, the best and most beautiful any where to be found. There are many castles,

* Aias, already mentioned, lies near Scanderoon, to which its great trade has since been transferred.

† This name is applied to all that part of Asia Minor then subject to the Turks, consisting chiefly of the modern provinces of Caramania and Roomyah.

‡ Cogni or Iconium, the capital; Kaisariah; Sebaste or Sivas.

§ This celebrated and ancient kingdom was then still governed by a separate monarch. It retains at present the name, but is divided between the Persians and Turks.

and cities, among which the noblest is Arzinga, the seat of an archbishop, and the metropolis of the whole district; there are also Argiron and Darzizi.* I assure you the province is very large, and during the summer all the Tartars of the Levant reside here with their flocks and herds, on account of its rich pastures; but in winter they cannot remain because of the severe cold and snow, amid which the animals could not live. Now, in this Armenia is the ark of Noah on a great mountain.† The circuit of its base cannot be traversed in less than two days; and the ascent is rendered impracticable by the snow on its summit, which never dissolves, but is increased by each successive fall. On the lower declivities, the melted snows cause an abundant vegetation, and afford rich pastures for the cattle which in summer resort thither from all the surrounding countries. To the south-east it borders on a kingdom called Mosul, inhabited by Jacobite and Nestorian Christians, of whom we will mention more hereafter. On the north it extends to the Georgians, and on that frontier is a fountain whence rises oil in such abundance that a hundred ships might be at once loaded with it. It is not good for eating, but very fit for fuel, for anointing the camels in maladies of the skin, and for other purposes; for which reason people come from a great distance for it, and nothing else is burned in all this country.‡ Now let us quit Armenia, and tell of Georgia.

IV.—On Georgia and its Productions.

In Georgia§ is a king always called David Melik, which means David the King; he is subject to the Tar-

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* Erzeroum and Argish, both still towns of importance.

† Ramusio has "an exceedingly great mountain, on which it is said the ark of Noah rested;" more correct, but we imagine the text is the original. This is Ararat, 17,359 feet high, exceeding Mont Blanc by about 2000. M. Parrot recently ascended it, we believe for the first time.

‡ This is the well known petroleum or rock-oil, found copiously near Baku, in the province of Shirvan.—Marsden, p. 51.

§ In Ramusio and all the editions known to Mr Marsden, the term is Zorzania,—the Z for G being peculiar to the old Venetian dialect. The Paris, Crusca, and Pucci use correctly the G.

tars; and anciently all the monarchs of this province were born with the mark of an eagle on their left shoulder. They are a handsome people, good archers, and valiant in battle. They are Christians of the Greek church, and wear their hair close shaven in the manner of clergy. This is the province which Alexander could not pass through on account of the narrowness of the path; because on one side is the sea, and on the other very high mountains, over which it is impossible to ride; and, as this strait continues above four leagues, a few men might hold out against the whole world. This was the reason why he could not pass; but he built a very strong tower, that no one might come upon him from the other side, and it is called the Iron Gate.* This is the place mentioned in the book of Alexander, where he enclosed the Tartars within their mountains; though the Tartars did not exist at that time, but a certain people called Comani, and other races besides. There are many cities and castles, with silk in abundance, with which, added to gold, they make cloths the most beautiful that ever man saw. Here are the finest eagles in the world; also victuals of every kind in abundance. The province is full of great mountains, and of narrow passes, so that I can tell you the Tartars could never obtain the entire sovereignty of it. There is a monastery called St Leonard, containing a great wonder, which I will now relate. A large lake of water issues from a neighbouring mountain, in which, during the whole year, there is not found a fish great or small, except from the day before Lent down to the evening of Easter Sunday; and during the whole of that time fishes are taken in great abundance, but none at any other. And know that this sea of which I have spoken is seven hundred miles in circuit, and receives the Euphrates, one of the delights of paradise, and many other great rivers. It is all surrounded by mountain and land; and lately

* This is the name given to it by the Turks. The report of its being built by Alexander is prevalent among the natives, though perhaps apocryphal.—Marsden, p. 56.

the merchants of Genoa, who have built ships, navigate it, bringing silk, which is called *gelle*.* Into this sea the great rivers Herdil,† Geihon, Kur, and Aras enter. In that province there is a grand city named Teflis, with suburbs and fortified posts around it. The inhabitants are Armenian and Georgian Christians, with some few Mohammedans and Jews. There are manufactures of silk and other articles. Now, having told you of the boundaries of Armenia to the north, I will describe those to the south and east.

V.—On the Kingdom of Mosul.

Mosul is a great kingdom on the eastern border of Armenia, and inhabited by various denominations of men, whom I will now describe. There is a race called Arabic, who adore Mohammed; also another who hold the christian law, but not as the church of Rome commands; they err in many things. They are denominated Nestorian and Jacobite, and have a patriarch named Jatolior, who makes archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other clergy, and sends them to all parts of Bagdad, India, and Cathay, as the pope does from Rome. All the Christians who are in those parts are of this sect; and all the cloths of silk and gold, which are called mosulin, are made there. I tell you, too, that the great merchants who are called mosulin, and bring the largest quantity of all costly spices, are of this kingdom.‡

* Mr Marsden conjectures very probably that this name is from Ghilan,—a province where raw silk is produced in great abundance. The author is mistaken as to the Euphrates; but it comes near to the Caspian, and he is writing from hearsay.

† This is the same name with Etil or Etilia, which we have repeatedly seen applied to the Volga. The Geihon appears to be the Oxus, which was then supposed to fall into the Caspian, instead of the Aral.

‡ Mosul seems to have been then a main entrepôt for the commerce of Central Asia. We cannot seemingly doubt, that the muslins here procured were those of India, especially when we find the name Muslin applied to merchants bringing other goods from that region. There were some cotton manufactures in the place itself, which might aid the mistake of supposing the whole produced there.

Among its mountains are people called Kurds, who are Nestorian and Jacobite Christians, but some are Saracens, and reverence Mohammed. They are an overbearing and wicked people, ever ready to rob the merchants.* Now let us leave Mosul, and speak of the great city of Baldach.†

VI.—On Baldach.

At this place dwelt the caliph, chief prelate of all the Saracens in the world, as the pope is at Rome. Through the middle of it flows a very large river, by which you can proceed to the sea of India, whence merchants go and come with their goods. From Baldach to the ocean by the stream is a voyage of eighteen days. The merchants going to India sail down that river to a place named Chisi,‡ and then enter the Indian sea. Between Baldach and Chisi is a great city named Bascra;§ and the woods around that city yield the finest dates in the world. In Baldach are many rich cloths of silk and gold, on which birds and beasts are represented; and it is the greatest and noblest city in all these regions. And know, assuredly, that the caliph was found to possess the most abundant treasure in gold, silver, and precious stones that ever was in the possession of man; and I will tell you how it happened. In the year of our Lord, 1255,|| the great sire of the Tartars, who is named Alau,¶ brother to the great sire that now reigns, assembled a very large army, and marched upon

* This character continues notorious and unmitigated to the present day.

† Bagdad, which, though it had lately ceased to be the capital of the caliphs, was still probably the greatest and most flourishing city of Western Asia.

‡ Kishm, a considerable island near the opposite extremity of the Persian Gulf, not far from Ormuz.

§ The great commercial city which we call Bussora, more properly pronounced Basra. The abundance of dates in its neighbourhood is particularly mentioned by Niebuhr.—Marsden, p. 65.

|| This is the date in the early editions; in Ramusio it is 1250; but the real one is 1258.

¶ Hoolaku, son to Taulai, and brother to Mangou Khan.

Baldach and took it by force, which was a glorious exploit; for it contained more than 100,000 horsemen besides foot soldiers;* and when it was taken, he found the caliph in possession of a tower full of gold, silver, and other treasure, such as never was seen at once in one place. When he discovered it he sent for the monarch and said: "Caliph, why have you amassed such a treasure, and what do you mean to do with it? Did you not know that I was your enemy, and coming to attack you with this mighty host? Knowing this, why did you not take your treasure, and give it to knights and soldiers to defend you and your city?" The caliph replied nothing, because he knew not what to say. Then, said Alau: "Caliph, since I see you love so much your treasure, I will give it you to eat." He then commanded that he should be shut up in the tower with the treasure, and that nothing should be given to him to eat or drink. Then he said to him: "Caliph, eat your treasure as heartily as you please, for you will never eat any thing else." He was then immured in the tower, where he died at the end of four days.† And after him there never was any other caliph.

VII.—On Toris or Tauris.

Toris‡ is a great city, in a province called Yrac, containing many towns and castles; but as this is the chief, I will tell you about it. The men live by merchandise, and by fabricating fine cloths of silk and gold. The place is so well situated that merchants proceed hither from India, Baldach, Mosul, Cremosor, and many other places. The Latin traffickers come to meet those from

* This is the statement in the early editions; in Ramusio the 100,000 men are mentioned as composing the Tartar army.

† This story is given also in the history of Haithon, king of Armenia, and was doubtless the general belief of Western Asia.

‡ Tauris, or Tabreez, a celebrated city of Persia and a favourite residence of Haroun al Raschid, and afterwards of Hoolaku the Tartar. Chardin describes it as containing half a million of people, and as rivalling Ispahan. It is now greatly decayed.

strange countries, from whom they purchase precious pearls and other valuable articles. The men are of indifferent character and very mixed origin, Armenians, Nestorians, Jacobites, Georgians, and Persians, and some who adore Mohammed. The inhabitants of the city are called Taurisians. Around it are very fine gardens, full of fruits and vegetables.

The Saracens here are most wicked and disloyal. They maintain that whatever is robbed or plundered from men of a different creed is justly acquired; while they regard as martyrs those of their own sect who die by the hands of Christians. If, therefore, they were not checked by their present rulers, they would break out into many outrages. These principles are common to them all. At the point of death, the priest comes and demands whether they believe that Mohammed was the prophet of God. If they profess this belief, they are assured of salvation; and through this easy absolution, which leaves scope for the perpetration of every crime, they have succeeded in converting many of the Tartars, who feel thus at liberty to indulge their worst propensities.

Near Toris is a monastery named after St Barsamo, and famous for sanctity. It contains an abbot and many monks, who dress like the Carmelites. Unwilling to lead an idle life, they are constantly weaving woollen girdles, which they place on the altar of their saint during divine service; and while going round the province to ask alms (as do their brethren of the Holy Ghost), they present these to their friends and persons of distinction, who value them as beneficial in the cure of rheumatism.*

VIII.—On a certain Miracle of the Movement of a Mountain in that Region.

Now I am to tell you of a great miracle† which

* The two preceding paragraphs being only in Ramusio, I incline to think we may recognise in them the same ecclesiastical hand to which there has appeared reason to suppose that his edition has been much indebted.

† This chapter is strongly stamped with the credulity of the

happened between Baldach and Mosul in the year 1225. There was a caliph in the former who held the Christians in great hatred, as it is natural for all the Saracens in the world to do. He thought day and night how he might compel all those in his country to become converts, or else kill them. Many others concurred in that wicked purpose, and they agreed upon this plan : They found in the gospel a text saying that if a Christian had as much faith as a grain of mustard-seed and made his prayer to God, he would be able to join two mountains together. On finding this text, they felt great joy, thinking they had thus either a means of converting them, or a pretext for killing them outright. He therefore sent for all the Jacobite and Nestorian believers in his country, who were very numerous ; and when they came before him, he showed them this gospel, made them read it, and asked if it were true. They replied that it was so. Then, continued the caliph, since so many Christians are here, there surely must be among you this small measure of faith ; therefore, said he, pointing to a large hill in view, you must remove that mountain, or I will put you all to death, because otherwise you must be wholly destitute of faith, and on that account deserve to die. If, however, you will turn to our good law of Mohammed, you shall be forgiven ; and, in the mean time, I allow you ten days to do what is required. He then dismissed them. On hearing what the caliph had said, they were in great fear, and knew not what to resolve. Then they all assembled, small and great, men and women, the bishop, archbishop, and priests of whom there were a considerable number, and they remained eight days and eight nights in prayer, that God, in his mercy, and for the diffusion of his faith, would come to their aid, and enable them to escape this

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age, from which it would be unreasonable to expect our traveller to be exempt. On his part it is mere hearsay, and reported as having happened fifty years before he passed through Persia. It may be considered a curious example of the sort of legends then circulated in that part of the world.

cruel death with which they were threatened. But what have I now to tell you? While they were thus deeply engaged in prayer, an angel, by the message of God, appeared to a bishop who was a man of very holy life. He said, "Oh, bishop! do you now go to a certain shoemaker with one eye, and tell him that at his prayer the mountain will be moved." Now this shoemaker was a very honest and chaste man; he fasted and went regularly to mass, and gave every day bread to the poor. I will tell you a thing that he did, to prove his good faith and life. It happened one day that a very beautiful woman came to his shop to purchase a pair of shoes, and in order to make them fit, he was obliged to look at her foot and ankle, and they were so finely shaped that he felt his eye take an undue pleasure in viewing them. As soon as she was gone, he began bitterly to reproach himself, and remembered the text, "if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee." He then took a sharp weapon, and stuck it into his eye, so that it burst in his head, and he never saw with it again. Thus you see he was a most holy and good man. When, therefore, the bishop had this vision, he told it to all his people, and they agreed that this shoemaker should be called before them, and when he came, they requested him to pray to God that he would make the mountain move. But when the shoemaker heard what the bishop and the others said, he answered that he was not so good a man as that God or our lady should for his sake do so great a miracle. But the Christians pressed him so earnestly, that he at last agreed, and made the prayer. When the final day was come, they all rose early in the morning, great and small, male and female; and entering the church, they sung the holy mass, and then proceeded out to the plain in front of the mountain. They were fully a hundred thousand, and they all placed themselves in front of the cross. The caliph then came with a vast number of Saracens, eager to slay the unbelievers, for they thought it impossible the hill could

be moved, and they themselves were in great fear and doubt; nevertheless they had good hope in their Creator. Then the shoemaker fell on his knees before the cross, lifted his hands to heaven, and prayed fervently that the mountain might be moved, and the Christians there assembled escape a dreadful death. When he had made his prayer, it was not long before the vast eminence began to stir, and move from its place. The Saracens, on seeing this, wondered greatly, and many of them were converted; nay, the caliph himself became a believer in the gospel, but secretly, and when he died, a cross was found round his neck; for which reason he was not buried in the same place with the other sovereigns, but in a tomb by himself. Now let us leave Baldach and go to Persia.

IX.—On the Province of Persia, and the Journey of the Magi.

Persia is a very extensive province, anciently very rich and flourishing, but now in a great degree wasted and destroyed by the Tartars. It contains a city called Sava, whence the three magi came to adore Jesus Christ when born at Bethlehem.* In that city are buried the three, in separate tombs, above which is a square house carefully preserved. Their hearts are still entire, with their hair and beards.† One was named Balthazar, the other Gaspar, the third Melchior. Messer Marco inquired often in that city about these three magi, but no one could tell him any thing, except that they were ancient

* The same observations may apply to this as to the preceding chapter. It is wanting in Pipino, the Basle version, and in Ramusio, so that Mr Marsden, finding it only in the Italian epitome, has not given it a place. Yet he seems to admit its genuineness, of which there can be no doubt, since it is found in the two Paris, the Crusca, and Pucci versions. As, therefore, we are giving an edition, not a selection, of the traveller's effusions, there seems no ground for its non-insertion.

† There is some appearance of the author here speaking as an eye-witness of this extraordinary scene. He only stands committed, however, to the extent of having seen three bodies partially embalmed; and there is no room to doubt that this art may have been in some degree practised in Persia.

kings, who were there buried. They informed him, however, that three days' journey farther was a tower called the Castle of the Fire-worshippers, because the men there venerate fire, and for the following reason. They say that anciently three kings of that country went to adore a certain prophet, newly born, and carried three offerings, gold, incense, and myrrh, to know if he were a king, a god, or a sage; for they said that, if he took gold, he was a king; if incense, he was a god; if myrrh, he was a sage. They went in one after another, and though they were of different ages and fashions, he appeared to each of them exactly like himself. When they came out and compared what they had seen, they wondered much, and then went in altogether, and the child then appeared to them what he really was, a boy of thirteen days old. They presented to him the three offerings, and he took them all, whence they concluded that he was at once god, king, and sage. He presented to them a closed box, desiring them not to open it till their return home. After having travelled a number of days, however, they were curious to see what was in the box, and opened it, when they found only a stone, which was meant to express that they should remain firm in the faith which they had received. They did not understand this meaning, and despising the gift, threw it into a well, when immediately a great fire came down from heaven, and began to burn brightly. When they saw this wonder, they were quite astonished, and repented that they had thrown away the stone. They however took a portion of the fire, carried it to their country, and placed it in their church, where they kept it continually burning. They revere it as a god, and use it for burning all their sacrifices; and when at any time it goes out, they repair to that well, where the fire is never extinguished,* and from it bring

* This story is evidently suggested by the burning wells or caverns that occur at Baku and other places in Persia, where naphtha and similar inflammable substances are in a state of constant combustion; a circumstance which had probably an effect in producing the adoration of fire in this region.

a fresh supply. This is what all the people of that country tell, and Messer Marco was assured of it by those of the castle, and therefore it is truth.* One of these kings was of Saba, the other of Ava, the other of the castle. Now let me tell you of Persia, its cities, and the actions and customs of the people.

X.—On the Kingdoms of Persia.

Know, then, that in Persia there are eight kingdoms, because it is a very great country, and I will tell you their names. The first is called Casum ;† the second, to the south, Cardistan ; the third Lor ; the fourth Cielstan ;‡ the fifth Istanit ;§ the sixth Cerazi ;|| the seventh Soucara ;¶ the eighth Tonocain,** which is on the remotest frontier. In this last are many fine horses of high value, which are taken in large numbers to be sold in India ; and the greater part of them are worth two hundred livres tournois each. They have also the finest asses in the world, one of which is worth full thirty marcs of silver.†† The men of that country lead these horses to two cities on the banks of the sea of India, called Chisi and Curmosa, and find there merchants, who buy them and carry them into their distant country. In these kingdoms there are many cruel men, who are constantly killing one another, and but for the fear of

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* However peremptory this assertion is, we may observe that it is founded wholly upon the testimony of others.

† Casbin. ‡ Seemingly Segistan. § Ispahan. || Shiraz.

¶ Mr Marsden supposes this to be a corruption of Korkan or Gurkan, the ancient Hyrcania ; but Count Boni seems justly to object that this territory lies north of the following, which yet is described the most northerly of all. He suggests the district of Sinjar, traversed by the Hermas, which falls into the Upper Euphrates ; in fact, the modern province of Algezira. —Il Millione, vol. ii. p. 42.

** Called elsewhere Timochain, seems to be the name of the city of Daumghaun, generally applied to the province of Khorasan.

†† The excellence of the Persian horses is too well known to require comment ; the asses are equally famed in the country, and called by Chardin the first in the world. He mentions 400 francs as the price of a good one.—Marsden, p. 79.

the Eastern Tartars, who now rule in this land, they would ruin the merchants. As it is, unless the latter are well provided with arms and bows, they often kill or hurt them severely.* These men all hold the law of Mohammed. In the city are industrious merchants; they make robes of silk and gold of various fashions, and raise also plenty of cotton. The country abounds in wheat, barley, millet, as well as in vines and other fruits.† Some may imagine that the Saracens do not drink wine, as being forbidden by their law; but they quiet their consciences by thinking that if boiled over the fire, which renders it milder and sweet, it may be drunk without breaking the commandment. Changing its taste, they change its name, and no longer call it wine, though it really is so.‡ Let us now leave them, and tell you of Yasdi.

XI.—On the City of Yasdi.

Yasdi § is a beautiful and noble city, with rich manufactures. The people make silk cloths called by its name, which the merchants carry into various countries. They all adore Mohammed. When a man departs from that city, he rides seven days over a plain, where in three places only there are habitations and inns for the traveller. There are many forests filled with partridges and other birds, which afford excellent sport; also

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* The elevated tracts of Persia have always been infested by predatory tribes, unless when kept in awe by a vigorous government.

† The fertility of the plains of Persia, and its fine manufactures, especially in silk, have been always noted.—Marsden, p. 80.

‡ I think in these two sentences, so abruptly introduced into Ramusio's edition only, we may discern the foreign hand which has repeatedly displayed such fervent zeal against the followers of Mohammed.

§ This city, commonly called Yezd, lies out of the general route of travellers; but all who have visited it describe its greatness, flourishing commerce, and extensive silk manufacture, which is even mentioned by Ibn Haukul. It has been said to contain 20,000 houses.—Marsden, p. 81; Boni, vol. ii. p. 46.

beautiful wild asses. At the end of these seven days a country called Creman presents itself.*

XII.—On the Kingdom of Creman.

Creman is a kingdom anciently belonging to Persia, and which used to be governed by a hereditary prince; but since the Tartar conquered it, he appoints what deputy he pleases. In that region the stones called turquoises are in great abundance; they are found in the mountains, and excavated from the rocks. The inhabitants make all things necessary for troops, such as reins, saddles, bows, arrows, quivers, and all kinds of arms, according to the custom of the country. The ladies work very neatly cloths of gold and silk, representing with the needle, beasts, birds, and many other objects.† In the

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* Here we find the first commencement of an itinerary; for not a single station has been indicated in passing across Persia. Yet I fear we shall not be able to trace the same precision which was so remarkable in the journey through China. The traveller was then very young, and had not probably the same accurate recollection. Many of the stages are much longer, which may have been in consequence of travelling post, the means of which would be furnished to them on going to the imperial court. Yet they begin with a singular deviation in the journey to Ormuz. Count Boni supposes the one here related to be that afterwards made in conveying the two princesses to Ghazan, on the northern frontier. We cannot but imagine, however, that they would go on to Bagdad, and would not be led along this desert and perilous route. Besides, a journey both *to* and *from* Ormuz is here narrated. Amid their own total silence as to the motive, we need not spend much time in conjecture. Perhaps they might have commercial transactions there, or, as enterprising merchants, might wish to view this celebrated emporium. They might even have an idea of proceeding by sea to China. Such deviations, however, give some explanation of the extraordinary period of three years and a half employed in their journey out.

† Kerman, capital of the province of that name, the ancient Carmania (quite different from Caramania in Asia Minor). It is still a considerable city, though much declined since the time when, as Pottinger states, "its manufactures of shawls and arms were celebrated all over Asia." It was also enriched by the transit of the Indian goods landed at Ormuz. Since the passage by the Cape, and the transference even of the Gulf-trade to Bushire, it has greatly suffered. Turquoise mines are found

mountains are reared the finest falcons in the world, for though smaller than the peregrine species, they fly so swiftly that no bird can escape them. When a man leaves the city of Creman, he travels seven days through towns and fortified places, finding much amusement, because there are great numbers of wild beasts and birds. At the end of these seven days, he comes to the declivity of a mountain, and continues two days always descending. There are abundance of fruits, but no habitation, only shepherds pasturing their flocks. The cold on this road during winter is so great that a man cannot safely travel unless with a very ample provision of clothes.

XIII.—On Camandu, Reobarle, and the Karauna Robbers.

At the bottom of this descent is a very extensive plain, at the commencement of which is a city named Camandu,* once wonderfully great and noble, but now much declined, because the Tartar invaders have repeatedly plundered it. The heat here is extreme, and the province is called Reobarle.† Its fruits are dates, pistachio nuts, apples of paradise, and others which do not grow in our country. Here are a species of birds called francolin, which are different from those of other lands, their colour being a mixture of white and black, while the beak and feet are red. The oxen are very large, white as snow, and the hair very smooth, in con-

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in different parts of Persia; but Mr Marsden has not succeeded in supplying proof of their existence in this neighbourhood.—Pp. 83, 84.

* It has been impossible to find any account of this city, though D'Anville's map shows on this site one named Memaun. It is likely that there was a flourishing place on the great caravan-route above alluded to, the discontinuance of which, however, rendered it impossible that it should revive after the catastrophe here mentioned. This tract is now as little known as any in Asia; yet Marco's description seems to intimate that it would reward the curiosity of some one of our enterprising travellers.

† Mr Marsden observes, that this is probably identical with Rudbar, a name common in Persia, and signifying "a river in a valley." Count Boni suggests Robat, passed by Pottinger on his way from Kerman to Shiraz; but this appears quite out of the direction.

sequence of the heat. Between the shoulders is a hump, two palms high, and their appearance is the most beautiful of any in the world. When the owner wishes to load them, they bend down as the camels do, and after receiving their burden, rise and bear it well, being extremely strong. There are sheep as large as asses, and with tails so thick and so broad as to weigh full thirty pounds. They are also fat, and make excellent food.* The people have castles and cities surrounded by walls of earth, in order to defend themselves against the Caraunas, a mixed race between the Indians and the Tartars. When these people wish to overrun the country and rob it, they, by their enchantment and diabolical agency, cause the day to become dark, so that you can see to little or no distance, and this darkness they make to last seven days.† They know the places so well, that they can ride during the thickest of it; and they are sometimes ten thousand in number, so that nothing found on the plain, man, beast, or any thing, can escape. They kill the old persons, and carry off the young to sell them for slaves. Their king is called Nogodar, and he went to the court of Ciagatai, who was the brother of the great khan, with 10,000 men, and remained with him, because his uncle was very powerful. During this stay, Nogodar committed a very great wickedness, and I will tell you what it was. He departed from his uncle Ciagatai, who was in Great Armenia, and took with him 10,000 of his people, who were very cruel, and marched by Badasian and through a province called Pasciai, and another called Chesciemur,‡

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* This species of sheep is well known in different parts of Asia. Both Russell and Chardin reckon the weight of the tail to be from fifteen to thirty pounds.—Marsden, p. 89.

† This is a startling statement, but we know nothing of the district; its moist and even marshy character, indicated by the luxuriant pasture, might naturally in this hot climate cause the ascent of heavy vapours and fogs. The plunderers, taking advantage of these occasions, might readily, by a superstitious people, be supposed to produce them.

‡ Peshawer and Cashmere. Mr Marsden has not been able to

losing many of his people and beasts, because the roads were narrow and very bad; and when they had passed all these provinces, they entered into India, on the borders of one called Dilivar. They came to the city of the same name, and took it from a king called Asidiu Sultan, who was very great and rich. There Nogodar, with his people, continues to rule, and makes war with all the other Tartars who dwell in the surrounding country.* Having told you of this plain, and of the people who produced darkness in order to rob, I must also

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trace any history of this prince, who indeed does not appear among De Guignes' elaborate list of the posterity of Gengis. The following notices may throw some light upon the subject. In the oriental history of Haithon, king of Armenia, it is mentioned that Gogodothai (Bergeron, Chagodai in Purchas, part iii. p. 114), second son of Okkoday, the successor of Gengis (and thus a nephew of Zagatai), was supplied by his father with an army, and marched southward into India; but having to pass over mountains and through deserts, he lost many men and horses, and was unable to make any conquest. He then came and complained of his hard fortune to his brother Jochi, the ruler of Turkestan and Persia, who generously gave him a share of his own possessions. I think, however altered the circumstances, this is evidently the same story. Let us now turn to Dow's translation of Ferishta's Indian History. It is there stated, that in 1242 (about the time that might be supposed) the Moguls invaded the western provinces, plundered Lahore, and then retreated to Ghizni; that they afterwards attempted to enter by way of Thibet, but were totally defeated; and that they also failed by way of Koondooz and Talikan. It is added, that in 1245, they made themselves masters of Cabul, Candahar, Ghizni, Balkh, and Herat. Putting all this together, we may with probability infer, that the prince, after his failure in India, obtained reinforcements from his relations, and established a kingdom in Afghanistan, of which our oriental histories seem to contain no record. The unfavourable representations made in the text were naturally dictated by the people who were smarting under the ravages of his predatory bands.

* It is curious that this narrative occurs only in the French edition and in Ramusio, a circumstance creditable to both. In the latter, however, there are some gross corruptions, particularly in introducing Malabar as the chief object and seat of invasion. This, which causes Mr Marsden much perplexity, is, we apprehend, a modern interpolation, after the exploits of Gama and Faria had made that territory an object of intense interest in Europe. Dilivar (Lahore or Lahawar) is also changed to Dely, a town on that coast.

mention that Messer Marco himself was nearly taken by them amid this gloom, but though a number of his companions were captured, and either killed or sold as slaves, he himself escaped to a castle named Canosalmi.*

XIV.—On the City of Cormos.

That plain extends five days' journey southward, and you then come to a descent which continues twenty miles by a very bad and difficult road, full of wicked robbers. You then approach the very beautiful plain of Formosa, watered by fine rivers, with plantations of the date-palm, and having the air filled with francolins, parrots, and other birds unknown to our climate.† You ride two days through it, and then arrive at the ocean, on which there is a city and fort named Cormos.‡ The ships of India bring thither all kinds of spiceries, precious stones, and pearls, cloths of silk and gold, elephants' teeth, and many other articles. It is the capital of a kingdom, having many cities and castles under it, and the sovereign is called Ruemedan Achomac. The climate, however, is intensely hot, and extremely unhealthy, and when any foreign merchant dies, the king inherits all his property. Wine is here made of dates and other spices, and is extremely good; but when drunk by men unaccustomed to it, has a strong purgative quality, though, after some use, it agrees well, and promotes corpulence. The people

* This, Mr Marsden observes, is probably the Persian word Khanah-al-salam, "a place of safety." Captain Grant, in describing an adjacent district, through which he travelled, observes, that every village had near it a fort, to which the inhabitants could flee in case of invasion.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. v. p. 337.

† This appears evidently to be the plain of Minab, which Captain Grant describes as forty-five miles in circumference, abounding in palms, and fertile in grain.—Journal, as above.

‡ Ormuz, in some editions Hormos, the orientals prefixing a soft aspirate, here expressed by *C*. Its fame during the middle ages, as an emporium of Indian wealth, need not be dwelt upon. In 1507, it was captured by Albuquerque, and in 1622, the English and Shah Abbas united in reducing it, when the principal edifices were razed to the ground, and it has now no longer any existence as a city.

live chiefly on dates and salted fish, particularly the tunny; considering these victuals to be the most wholesome, and that if they used wheaten bread and flesh they would fall sick. The ships are very bad, and many are lost from not being secured by nails like ours, but sewed together by a thread made of the bark of the Indian nut-trees, which being softened in water, becomes like horse-hair, and is durable enough. They use it for want of iron, but it is by no means strong or secure. They have a mast, sail, and rudder, all single, and a coverlet of leather, which is spread over the goods, and on that they place the horses, many of which are transported into India. These ships, too, are not tarred, but covered with the oil of fish. The people are black, and adore Mohammed. They do not remain in the city during summer, for then they would all die, but retire to the country, where they have verdant gardens, finely watered by streams. Even there they would not escape, because there often blows from the sandy tracts that surround the city a wind so excessively hot that it would kill them all, if they did not plunge into the water and thus escape it.* They sow wheat, barley, and other kinds of grain in the month of November, and reap them in March, when they become ripe and perfect; but none except the date will endure till May, being dried up by the extreme heat. I have also to tell you, when men or women die, great grief is shown, and the ladies, during full four years after the death of their husbands, make lamentations at least once a-day. On these occasions, they assemble their relations and neighbours, who join them in loud moanings and cries. In proof of the extreme violence of the heat, Marco Polo mentions

* This is the sirocco or simoom, the distressing and even fatal effects of which need not be described. Strange as this remedy may seem, Mr Marsden quotes two good travellers, Pietro della Vale and Schillinger, for the fact of recourse being had to it in this very place, represented as the hottest on the face of the earth. Count Boni, vol. ii. p. 54, quotes also Tavernier and Chardin for the unhealthiness, and extreme intensity of the heat.

the following circumstance which occurred during his residence. The ruler of Cormos neglected to pay his tribute to the King of Creman, who took the resolution of enforcing it at the season when the principal inhabitants go into the country. He therefore despatched 1600 horse and 5000 foot through the district of Reobarle, to take them by surprise. Being misled, however, by the guides, they did not reach the place till night, when they halted to rest in a grove near the town. On renewing their march next morning, they were attacked by the hot wind, and all suffocated; not one surviving to carry back the fatal intelligence. When the people of Cormos learned this event, and went to bury the dead bodies lest they should infect the air, they found them so softened by the intense heat, that the limbs, when handled, separated from the trunks; and it was necessary to dig graves close to where the corpses lay.*

XV.—Return to Creman.

We will now leave this city, and not go on to India, for I will describe it farther on in my book, in the proper time and place. We will return, therefore, by another road to Creman, because the countries now to be delineated can be reached only by way of that city, and I must tell you that Ruemedan Achomac, of whom we have just spoken, is subject to its king. The route in returning thither from Cormos is through a very fine plain. There are many springs whence the water issues in a hot state, forming baths very salutary in cutaneous and other diseases. Here is abundance of fruits and dates, also of partridges and other birds; but the wheaten bread, owing to the quality of the water, is so bitter that no one unaccustomed to its use can eat it. I now wish to tell you of a country lying to the north. When a man has left Creman, he travels seven days in that direction, through a very dreary region. During

* Mr Marsden, p. 100, quotes from Chardin an instance of this condition of the bodily frame being actually produced by the action of the simoom.

three days he finds no river, and the little water met with is salt, green like grass, and so bitter that it is impossible to drink it, and if a man tastes even a drop, it produces violent purging. Travellers, therefore, carry water with them; but the beasts being obliged to drink such as they find, suffer severely. The whole tract is an arid desert, destitute of animals, which could not find food. On the fourth day, you reach a river of fresh water, but with its channel mostly under ground. In some spots, however, the force of the current makes abrupt openings, when the stream appears for a short space, and drink is abundantly supplied. Then follows another tract that lasts four days, and is also a dry desert, with bitter water, and no animals except wild asses. At the end of the four days, we leave the kingdom of Creman and proceed towards Cobinam.

XVI.—On the City of Cobinam.

Cobinam is a great city inhabited by Mohammedans. There is abundance of iron, brass, and andanico, of the second of which they construct large and beautiful mirrors; they make here also the tutty, which is extremely good for the eyes, and likewise sponge, in the following manner. They take a vein of earth fitted for this purpose, and throw it into a burning furnace, above which is a grating of iron; then the smoke and moisture ascending adhere to the iron and form tutty, while the earth which remains in the furnace becomes sponge.*

XVII.—On the Province of Tonocain.

When a man departs from Cobinam, he goes through a desert of eight days, and the country is very arid; there is neither fruit nor trees, and the water is bitter and bad, so that he must carry both it and food for himself, but the beasts drink that on the road,

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* Cobinam is Khubees, a place once considerable, but now much decayed. Mr Marsden considers andanico to be antimony, and represents it as the substance thrown into the furnace; but the early editions make it an earth. In the French one, the mirrors are of brass; in Ramusio's, of steel.

though very unwillingly. He then comes to a province called Tonocain,* with cities and many castles, bordering upon Persia towards the north; and there is a very great plain on which grows what the Christians call the dry tree, which I will describe to you. It is very large, and its leaves are green on one side and white on the other. It yields a nut like the chestnut; but there is nothing within it. It is a strong wood, and yellow like box; and there is no other tree in those parts for a hundred miles round, except on one side, at ten miles' distance.† It is said by the people of the country to be the place where Alexander fought with Darius. There are many towns and castles, and the inhabitants have abundance of all good things, the climate being neither too cold nor too hot. Now I must tell you of a country called Mulecte, where the Old Man of the Mountain used to dwell.

XVIII.—On the Castle of the Old Man of the Mountain, and how he trained and employed his Assassins.

You shall learn all about the Old Man of the Mountain, as I Marco heard related by many persons. He was called in their language Alaodin, and had caused to be formed, in a valley between two mountains, the largest and most beautiful garden that ever was seen. There grew all the finest fruits in the world, and it was adorned by the most beautiful houses and palaces, the interior being richly gilded, and furnished with finely coloured pictures of birds and beasts, and the most striking objects. It contained several conduits through which flowed

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* Timochain, *Ramusio*. There seems no doubt that this is the same word with Daumghaun; but we see no necessity for supposing, with Mr Marsden, that they went back to that city, which would be a very retrograde course. The name is here evidently applied to a large province, including probably the best cultivated part of Khorasan. Their direction from Kerman through Khubees would lead to one of its eastern districts, which would also agree better with the subsequent itinerary.

† Mr Marsden, p. 110, proves this to be the plane-tree, which appears really to abound in this part of Persia, but was then unknown in Europe.

respectively water, wine, honey, and milk. Here were ladies and damsels unequalled in beauty and in the skill with which they sung and played on instruments of every description. Now the Old Man made his people believe that this garden was paradise, and he formed it thus because Mohammed had given the Saracens to believe that those who went into that place would meet great numbers of beautiful women, and find rivers of water, wine, milk, and honey; hence the visiters were led to think that this really was paradise. Into this garden he admitted no man except those whom he wished to make assassins. The entry to the spot was commanded by a castle so strong that he did not fear any power in the world. He kept in his court all the youths of the country between twelve and twenty years of age, and when he thought proper, selected a number who had been well instructed in the description of paradise. He gave them a beverage which threw them into a deep sleep, then carried them into the garden, and made them be awakened. When any one of them opened his eyes, saw this delightful spot, and heard the delicious music and songs, he really believed himself in the state of blessedness. When again, however, he fell asleep, he was brought out into the castle, where he awoke in great wonder, and felt deep regret at having left that delightful abode. He then went humbly to the Old Man, worshipping him as a prophet. Being asked whence he came, he told that he had been in the paradise described by Mohammed, relating all he had seen, and saying that he desired much to die and return thither. The chief then named to him a great lord whom he wished him to kill. The youth cheerfully obeyed, and if in the act he was taken and put to death, he suffered with exultation, believing that he was to go into the happy place. If, after performing the deed, he escaped, the Old Man received him with the greatest honour, and when he wished to destroy another chief, employed him afresh, saying that he was sent into paradise. Thus scarcely any person could escape being

slain, when the Old Man of the Mountain desired it; and many barons became vassals to him through the dread of thus losing their lives.*

XIX.—How Alau took and killed the Old Man of the Mountain.

Having now told you of the Old Man of the Mountain and his assassins, you shall hear how he was killed. I had forgot to mention, that he had other old men placed under him, one of whom he sent into the country of Damascus, and the other into Kurdistan. But now let us come to his destruction. It was in 1262 that Alau, the Lord of the East, having heard of his wicked deeds, determined to destroy him. He sent his generals with a great body of men, who besieged the castle full three years, and then could only reduce it by famine. Alaodin being taken, was killed, with all his people, and since that time there has been no assassin; and thus ended his dominion and his wickedness.†

* The dynasty of the Ismailies or Assassins is famous in the history of Asia. Among the great men who fell its victims are mentioned Mostarsched, caliph of Bagdad; a son of the Caliph Mostali; Nizam ul Mulk, a famous Turkish vizier; a reis of Ispahan and one of Tauris; a mufti of Casbin. Count Boni considers the castle to have been somewhere between Casbin and Amol. Mr Marsden, while he admits the particulars here given to coincide with the general belief of Asia, considers them extravagant and incredible. We really see nothing very improbable in such a scheme being adopted by a daring and crafty chief, having to do with a simple and credulous race. That writer and De Guignes suppose that Alaodin merely introduced these youths into his palace, and by indulging them in every luxury made them zealous in his service. We cannot but observe, that such treatment would rather tend to enervate and attach them to life, than impel them thus wildly to renounce it. The term assassin does not occur in Ramusio, but is found in the earlier editions.

† Alau, as formerly noticed, is Hoolaku, brother to Mangou the supreme khan, who sent orders to him to proceed against this atrocious potentate. The latter was for some time protected by Baatu, and his successor Barka; but in 1255 (for the date of the text, as in other instances, is incorrect), Hoolaku invested the castle, and, after a siege of twenty-seven months, reduced it by famine. Rokneddin, who had succeeded to Alaodin, was carried with his family to Karakorum, where they were all put to death. It may be observed, that the term "old man," is an

XX.—Of a certain City named Sapurgan.

When a man departs from that castle, he rides through beautiful hills covered with rich herbage, with fruits and all things in great abundance. The country extends to a journey of six days, and contains cities the inhabitants of which adore Mohammed. Yet sometimes you find a desert of fifty or sixty miles, without water, which men must carry with them. When the traveller has rode six days through the country now described, he finds a city called Sapurgan.* It has great abundance of all things, among which are the finest melons in the world in great plenty, and they are preserved in this manner: The people cut them all round like cucumbers, and dry them in the sun, when they become sweeter than honey, and are sold through all the country. Here is fine hunting of beasts and birds. Now I will go on to another city named Balk.

XXI.—Of the City of Balk.

Balk is a great and noble town, and was anciently still more so; but the Tartars have spoiled and wasted it, so that many beautiful houses and palaces of marble are now destroyed.† It was here, as I was told by the people, that Alexander took to wife the daughter of Darius. The people revere Mohammed; and at this point ends the dominion of the Eastern Tartars, this city being the boundary of Persia, between north-east and

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improper translation of sheik, chief, or ruler.—Marsden, pp. 119, 120.

* This is evidently Shibbergaun, a town near Balkh. The period of twelve days seems too small; though, as already observed, the journey was probably from the eastern instead of the western part of Khorasan. It may be suspected, too, that the interval of desert has been omitted.

† Balkh, one of the most ancient and celebrated cities of Asia, but which has suffered severely in modern times by its exposure to Tartar invasion. After being restored to some degree of prosperity by a late ruler, Killich Ali, it has been nearly ruined by the violence of Murad Beg, the chief of Koondooz. Moorcroft reckoned it to contain only a thousand families, and, what is singular, could discover no monuments of ancient grandeur. —Vol. ii. p. 494.

east. Now let us tell of another country named Dogana. On leaving Balk, you ride two days between north-east and east, and find no habitation, because the people have all fled to the fortresses in the mountains for fear of wicked men, who lay waste the land. There is no want of water or game, and lions are also seen. No food is to be procured, but travellers must carry it both for themselves and their horses.

XXII.—Of the Castle of Taikan.

When a man has rode these two days, he finds a castle called Taikan,* where there is a great corn-market, and the country round is fine. The mountains towards the south are very high, and formed entirely of salt,† which is the best in the world, and people come for it from a distance of thirty days' journey round. It is so hard, that it can be broken only by great iron hammers; and there is enough to supply the whole human race till the end of time. Departing from that city, you go three days north-east, through a fine country, well planted with grain and fruits. The people, who are followers of Mohammed, are wicked and murderous. They spend much time in the tavern, for they have abundance of good wine, well prepared. They wear nothing on their heads but a cord ten palms long wrapt round it. They are good hunters, and thus supply themselves with venison; but have no clothing except the skins of animals.

XXIII.—Of the City of Scassem.

When a man travels three days, he finds a city named Scassem,‡ which is on the plain, while the others are

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* See in a note on the following chapter a discussion as to the place here named.

† There appears no doubt that the immense salt formation which begins at Kalabagh, on the western bank of the Upper Indus, extends northward to this quarter. South of Koondooz, Mr Wood found the valley of Shor-Ab, or the Salt Water, which, draining the mountains of Eshk Meshk, becomes thus impregnated with the mineral contained in them.—Pp. 131, 409.

‡ There seems here a serious difficulty, in which Marsden and Boni could not give us any assistance, as they were destitute of the precise local information recently furnished by Moorcroft

on the mountains, and through it flows a considerable river. There are here many porcupines, and when the hunters set their dogs upon them, the hogs collect together and push their spines against their assailants, and often hurt them severely.* This Scassem is a large province, and the shepherds dwell in caverns on the mountains, which are easily formed, being wholly of earth, and make large handsome habitations.† When a man leaves this city, he travels three days without finding a house, or any thing to eat or drink, being obliged

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and Wood. If we assume Taikan to be Khoolloom, and Scassem to be Koondooz, and then reckon the three days from the last to Badakshan, the itinerary will exactly correspond with the geography of the country. But the names have no resemblance, while they are found almost identical in two other points of the territory; Tai-kan in Talikan, and Scassem in Ish-kashm. Yet this space would occupy about twenty journeys; while the first place would be on the border of Badakshan, the latter on its eastern, instead of three days short of its western frontier. The perplexity is increased by variation of texts; for the French, the Crusca, and the Pucci, have *twelve* days from Balkh to Tai-kan, which would carry the traveller to Talikan; but the three days thence to Ish-kashm would be very inadequate, while the relation with Badakshan would be quite broken up. Pipino, the Basle, the Paris Latin, and the Riccardino, all agree with Ramusio in the *two* days. The French fails often in numbers; and the old words *doze*, twelve, and *dou*, two, might, in bad MS., be easily mistaken. The description of Scassem, as situated in a large plain, with a river running through it, corresponds exactly to Koondooz. Ish-kashm, indeed, has also these features, but not so remarkably; and the ruby mines in its vicinity would surely have been mentioned. On the whole, I cannot doubt that Khoolloom and Koondooz are the two stations; though how these names have been applied to them, must be submitted to the decision of oriental scholars. Places in Asia, at the distance of five centuries, are subject to great variation of nomenclature.

* Mr Wood (p. 249) mentions the great facility afforded by the hog-tracks in travelling over the snow, those animals being so numerous, that they had trodden it down like a flock of sheep. He does not expressly say that they were hedgehogs.

† Mr Wood does not fully confirm this, but describes them as always built on the slope of a hill, and sunk two feet under ground. They are spacious, containing under one roof compartments for different related families. To form such houses on this site, much excavation must have been employed.—P. 269-271.

to carry provisions with him, and he then enters the district of Badascian.

XXIV.—Of the Province of Badascian.

Badascian is a large province, whose people adore Mohammed, and have a language of their own. It is governed by kings descended from Alexander and the daughter of Darius lord of Persia, and all these kings are called in Saracen Zulcarnem, which means in their language Alexander.* In this country occur the precious stones called *balasiu*, which are very beautiful and valuable. They are found in the rocks of a mountain called Lighinan, and are cut out of very deep caverns, as is done by those who work silver mines. Know, too, that the king makes them be worked out for himself, and no other man may cut out balasiu on that mountain, on pain of death. His majesty sends them as presents to other princes and great lords, either as homage, or in token of friendship, and he likewise sells them for gold and silver. The prohibition is enforced that they may continue valuable; for if all persons were allowed to dig for them, they would be quite depreciated.† You

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* This descent is still confidently claimed by several mountain-chiefs in this and the adjacent territories. It is even admitted by the people, among whom it procures great respect. Reports have also been received, that these tribes remained pagan amid surrounding Moslems, and had a peculiarity of language and manners, which might, it was supposed, mark a Greek origin. Of this, Mr Wood (p. 241-271), on attentive examination, could discover no trace. They appeared to him merely the Tajiks, or natives, who had been driven by Moslem conquest into these mountain recesses. The claim appeared to him to rest merely on the vague reverence there entertained for the name of Sekander Zool Kurnein. It probably, however, arose under the Greek kingdom established in Bactria (Balkh) soon after Alexander's death, which continued several ages powerful and flourishing. The sovereigns would probably pass in the country for descendants of the Macedonian conqueror; nor is it unlikely that branches of their families might intermarry with great mountain-chiefs. Genealogical records in such situations are long and carefully preserved.

† The Balass rubies have always been celebrated in the East. (Marsden, p. 132.) Mr Wood was disappointed in his attempt

must likewise know, that in other mountains of the same country are found the stones of which ultramarine is made, and it is the finest and best in the world.* There are also lofty hills containing veins yielding silver in abundance. The country is extremely cold, but it breeds very good horses, which run with great speed over these wild tracts without being shod with iron.† There are found also the falcons called *sacri*, which fly well and swiftly; also those called *lanier;* and there is abundant hunting of beasts and birds. Wheat and good barley are plentiful; they have no oil of olives, but make it from sesamum and nuts. This kingdom has many a narrow pass and strong post to secure it against the entrance of enemies, and the cities and castles are strongly built on high mountains.‡ The people are good archers and hunters, and mostly clad in the

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to reach them; but he learned that they were on the northern bank of the Oxus, opposite to Ish-kashm, and at the western extremity of Badakshan. They were said to be 1200 feet above the river, either in red sandstone or limestone, largely impregnated with magnesia, forming a material easily worked. The galleries were described as numerous. They have always, it should seem, continued to be a royal monopoly; but Murad Beg, the tyrannical chief of Koondooz, on conquering the country, being irritated at the small profit which the gems afforded, seized all those employed and sold them as slaves, so that the mines are not at present worked.—P. 316.

* The lapis lazuli mines are also well known, and were found by Mr Wood to the north of Badakshan, on the Kokcha, its principal river. They are about 1500 feet above the water, in an unstratified limestone, veined black and white. The rock is first softened by fire, and then beaten with hammers, till the stone is extracted. For the last four years, this working also has been suspended by the caprice of Murad Beg.—P. 263-266.

† Mr Wood describes the horses of this country as not possessing the body and power of those of Turkestan, but as a small and hardy breed, well suited to the territory. Endurance, he says, is more valued than speed; yet the latter is called into requisition, since the gallop is the usual pace, and distances are measured by the time they can be thus traversed. He says, they are shod on the fore though not on the hind feet, thus only half confirming the statement of our traveller; but there may have been a change since his time.—P. 222.

‡ The mountainous character of the country and its lofty passes are strikingly depicted by Mr Wood, pp. 249, 250.

skins of beasts, on account of the scarcity of cloth. The great ladies, however, wear from sixty to a hundred yards of bombasine wrapped round their body, in order that they may appear very fat, because the men delight in such a shape.*

On the summits of the mountains the air is so pure and salubrious that the inhabitants of the towns and lower valleys, when attacked by fever or other inflammatory complaints, immediately remove thither, and in three or four days recover their health. Marco Polo affirms, that he himself experienced its excellent effects; for after being confined nearly a year by sickness, he was advised to try change of air by ascending the hills, and he then immediately regained his strength.†

XXV.—Of the Province of Pascia.

You are to know that ten days south from Badascian is a province called Pascia.‡ The people have a peculiar language; they are worshippers of idols, and much skilled in enchantments and diabolical arts. The men wear ear-rings and buckles of gold and silver, with pearls and precious stones. They are a very artful and

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* "Like the mantilla of Spain," says Mr Wood, p. 224, "the gown of the Uzbeck lady envelops the head as with a hood, and from about the ears are suspended the sleeves, long narrow slips of cloth that sweep the ground, and which dangle to and fro as the portly beauty rolls along."

† This paragraph, found only in Ramusio, is submitted to the reader. Besides its absence in all the early editions, it seems mysterious when and how the traveller spent so long a period in this remote region, and why such a circumstance is omitted in even the slight introductory narrative of his travels. We find no recent mention of any unhealthy tracts in Badakshan. Burnes (vol. ii. pp. 227, 228) describes its climate generally as genial and delightful; but that of Koondooz as pestilential.

‡ The name in most editions is Bascia. That in the text is one of three in the French version, here adopted as confirming what we have no doubt is the just opinion of Mr Marsden, that the place indicated is Peshawer. There is no other in that quarter possessing the importance here ascribed to it; and the peculiar heat is fully confirmed by Forster and Elphinstone. (Marsden, pp. 135, 136.) Count Boni objects that it ought to be on the road to Cashmere; but this is not said in the text.

malicious people. The province is extremely hot, and the people live upon flesh and rice. Now let us leave it, and tell of another, which is distant from this seven days towards the south-east.

XXVI.—Of the Province of Kesimur.

Kesimur is inhabited by idolaters, who have a language of their own. They have a wonderful knowledge of the enchantments of devils, making their images speak, and by sorcery changing the seasons, causing great darkness, and doing other wonders which could not be believed unless they were seen. The idols of this province are the heads over all the others, and went down hence to the neighbouring countries. The people are meagre and of a brown complexion; but the females are very beautiful. They live on flesh and rice, and have a number of cities and castles. They have woods and deserts, and passes so strong that they have little dread of an invader: their king rules with great justice. In this country are hermits, who observe great abstinence in eating and drinking, and carefully abstain from all offences against their faith; and this is done through veneration of their gods. They have abbeys and monasteries, are held in much reverence by the people of the country, and live to a great age.* The coral brought

* The description here given of this celebrated region does not exactly correspond to our ideas. We do not believe that Marco personally visited it; yet the lofty mountain-passes and the temperate climate are correctly described; but he would, we think, have noticed, had he been there, the beauty and fertility of its valley. Moorcroft states that the inhabitants, of the cities at least, are slightly made, and that their complexion varies from dark to olive. The beauty of the females, so celebrated in the East, is mentioned in the French, Crusca, and Pucci, and, though expunged from the others, is again noticed in Ramusio. But the sacred character ascribed to the region, and its being a chief seat of the Boodhist religion here evidently described, is not confirmed by recent authorities. Both Forster and Moorcroft intimate that no oriental nation is so indifferent upon such subjects. (Marsden, p. 140; Moorcroft, vol. ii. pp. 128, 129.) Marsden, however, has quoted testimonies from the Ayin Akbari and Abu'lfazl, to its having, even in the sixteenth cen-

from our land is sold more readily there than in any other nation. From this place you may go to the sea of India, and if we went farther we should enter into that country; but being to return that way, we will then describe it in due order, and now go back to Badascian.

XXVII.—Of the Countries of Vokhan, Pamier, and Belor.

When a man departs from Badascian, he goes twelve days between north-east and east, along a river which belongs to a brother of the lord of that land. There are many castles, and a good number of inhabitants, who are valiant and adore Mohammed. He then comes to a province named Vokhan, not very large, being only three days' journey in every direction. The people are of the same description, and subject to the ruler of Badascian.* Wild beasts and birds of every kind for hunting are most abundant. Having left this place, and travelled three days, always over mountains, he ascends to a district which is said to be the highest in the world.†

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tury, borne this religious reputation. In 1585, however, it was subjected to the Mogul empire, and became the favourite summer residence of the princes of that dynasty. The presence of a Mohammedan court, the most splendid and luxurious in the East, was very inconsistent with the maintenance of an ascetic superstition. Under its influence was seemingly formed that infidel and licentious character which now distinguishes the people. There are remains of splendid temples, but in ruin. (Moorcroft, vol. ii. p. 255.) The absence, too, of all mention of the shawl manufacture is remarkable; but this splendid fabric may have grown under the patronage afforded by the imperial residence, as it has declined since that was withdrawn.

* This is Wakhan, extending exactly, as here described, along the banks of the Upper Oxus. The inhabitants are Mohammedans, and resemble their neighbours, though living in a somewhat ruder style. They are at present governed by a separate chief.—Wood, p. 369, &c.

† Strong as this expression is, it is nearly correct; for, as a table-land, only that of Bolivia, which was unknown to our traveller, could rival that here described. Mr Wood estimates its several heights at 15,600 feet, being almost on a level with the summit of Mont Blanc; and the difficulty of respiration incident to such high situations was decidedly felt. The natives call this place Boni-i-damiah, or the roof of the world.—P. 352-362.

Here he finds a plain between two vast hills, through which flows a very fine river, issuing from a large lake ;* and it is the best pasturage in the world, for a lean animal becomes fat here in ten days.† All kinds of wild animals abound ; in particular, a species of sheep with horns of three, four, and even six palms long. These are formed by the shepherds into large spoons, out of which they eat ; and are even employed in enclosing the places where they keep their cattle. The horns are heaped up in large quantities along the road, for the purpose of guiding travellers during winter, when it is covered with snow.‡ While a man passes for twelve days along this high plain, which is called Pamier,§ he sees neither habitation nor verdure, but must carry all his provisions along with him. No birds can live in

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* This is the Oxus issuing from the lake Sir-i-kol, fed from the perpetual snows of the surrounding mountains. Mr Wood (p. 355) was peculiarly struck with the accuracy of the description given by our traveller of this spot. The mention of the lake occurs only in Ramusio, and is creditable to that edition.

† Mr Wood (p. 365) was informed by the Kirghiz of the grass here being so rich, that a sorry horse is brought into good condition in less than twenty days. " Their flocks and herds," says he, " roam over an unlimited extent of swelling grassy hills of the sweetest and richest pasture." This luxuriant vegetation, caused probably by exuberant moisture, is remarked also in the valleys of the Himmaleh, where the inhabitants assert, that whatever is cropped during the day is reproduced in the night.—Account of India (Edinburgh Cabinet Library), vol. i. p. 32.

‡ Mr Wood (pp. 350, 351) fully recognises the astonishing size of these horns, which, projecting above the snow, often indicated the direction of the road ; and were disposed in a semicircle round the summer encampments of the Kirghiz. They belong, he says, to an animal between the goat and the sheep.

§ M. Humboldt seems to charge our traveller with applying this name to a plain, when it belongs merely to a station, situated, according to him, in 39° 30′ N. lat. Mr Wood, however, who was on the spot, fully confirms Marco's statement (p. 331), describing Pamir as a very lofty table-land, stretching north from 37° 2′, consequently Humboldt's station was only its northern limit.—Fragmens de Géologie et de Climatologie Asiatiques (2 tom. 8vo, Paris, 1831), p. 56.

this cold region ; and I can even state that the fire does not burn so clear nor with the same colour as in other places, nor does it cook victuals so well.* Leaving this place, he has to go on forty days between north and north-east, and passes many rivers and deserts ; and in all this journey finds neither verdure nor habitation, but must carry all his provisions along with him. This country is called Belor.† The people live in very lofty mountains. They are idolaters, extremely savage, violent, and cruel, subsist by hunting, and dress themselves in the skins of beasts.‡

XXVIII.—Of the Province of Cascar.

Cascar was anciently a kingdom, but is now under the dominion of the great khan. The people adore Mohammed, and have cities and castles; they are situated between the north and east. They subsist by merchandise and manufactures, having also fine gardens, vineyards, and orchards, with a good supply of silk. The merchants, in carrying on their trade, go round the whole world ; but they are sordid and covetous, eating and drinking very poorly. Some Nestorian Christians reside here, observing their own customs and laws.

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* Humboldt (Fragmens, &c. pp. 56, 57) remarks that our traveller was the first who pointed out this circumstance, which he himself often found verified in his mountain excursions. It arises, we imagine, not as Mr Marsden supposes from the severe cold, but from the thinness of the air.

† Beloor or Beloot Taugh is the name given to that lofty range, which shuts in on the west Thibet and Chinese Turkestan. All accounts agree as to its elevated and desolate character. Marsden, pp. 144, 145.

‡ It must be confessed that Mr Moorcroft gives rather an opposite character, representing them as simple and peaceful shepherds, many of them owning large herds and flocks. This, however, was from hearsay; while Mr Wood, who reached their country, describes them (p. 338) as inveterate thieves, who rifle every caravan they can master, and commit robberies even on each other. Mention is, however, made by him of a tribe called the Kazaks (pp. 337, 343), who inhabit the low plains along the foot of this great mountain range, and who really correspond to Mr Moorcroft's report, being probably the race described to him ; but they did not come under the view of our traveller.

The people have a language of their own; and the province extends five days' journey.* Now let us leave it and speak of Samarcan.

XXIX.—Of the City of Samarcan.

Samarcan is a very great and noble city, lying to the south, inhabited by Christians and Saracens. The people are governed by a nephew of the great khan, who, however, is not his friend, but is in open hostility against him. I have to tell you a great wonder which happened in this city. You must know that not very long since, Ciagatai, brother to the great khan, became a Christian, and was lord of that and of many other countries. The believers of Samarcan rejoiced greatly at his conversion, and erected a large church in honour of it, bearing the name of St John the Baptist. They took a large and fine stone belonging to the Saracens, and made it the base of a column, which rose in the middle of the edifice, and supported the whole roof. Now it came to pass that Ciagatai died, whereupon the Mohammedans, having been much enraged at this stone

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* This city and territory, called commonly Cashgar, is mentioned by Ptolemy as the country of the Casii, and by Ibn Haukul and Edrisi under the name of Chage; but Ritter (Asien, vol. vii. p. 409) justly observes, that our traveller is the first who has given any distinct account of it. The place is still the most important in Eastern Turkestan, retaining a great trade, particularly in horses, but, from causes to be afterwards explained, is now in this respect inferior to Yarcund. Humboldt supposes it to contain 15,000 houses and 80,000 inhabitants (Fragmens, &c., p. 250); but Burnes (vol. ii. p. 230), while estimating Yarcund at 50,000, considers it the more populous of the two. All this territory, in the middle of the eighteenth century, was independent; but in 1757 the Mantchoo rulers of China, taking advantage of internal dissensions, reduced it to subjection. They merely hold it, however, in military occupation, allowing the Mussulman magistrates to administer the government. Mr Fraser (Travels in Khorasan, App. pp. 114, 115) considers them thus in a happy situation; yet they themselves thought otherwise, since in 1827 they raised a formidable insurrection, but being subdued, their leader was taken and put to death. This city, now the chief military station, has always a garrison of 5000 Chinese.—Burnes, vol. ii. p. 228-231.

being taken for the use of the church, consulted with each other how to recover it by force. This they could now easily do, being ten to one of their adversaries. Several of their elders went and told the Christians that they wished to receive back the slab, which had been formerly theirs. The latter answered, that they would willingly restore it, but for the injury it would do to their building, and offered to pay a fair price for it. The others replied, that they wished neither gold nor treasure, but must have their stone. The government now belonged to the nephew of the great khan, who commanded that within two days it should be restored. When the Christians received that order, they were much grieved, and knew not what to do. They went, however, and with many tears implored John the Baptist to relieve them in this tribulation. On the morning of the day when the stone was to be returned, the pillar, by the power of our Lord, rose up at least three palms, and supported itself as well as when the stone was beneath it, and has continued to do so till this day. This was and still is accounted one of the greatest miracles that ever happened in the world.* Now let me tell you of a province which is called Yarcan.

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* It was a considerable disappointment, when expecting a description of this celebrated Asiatic capital, to find only the ridiculous legend here narrated. Ciagatai, commonly called Zagatai, was one of the sons of Gengis, who actually held sway in this region. According to the histories, he usually resided with his brother Okkoday, but he might visit occasionally this fine possession. Mr Marsden repels the idea of his being a Christian ; yet Pétis de la Croix (Histoire de Genghiscan, p. 100) mentions that, amid the philosophic indifference which reigned at his court, several members of the conqueror's family embraced this and other creeds. At all events, the Nestorians may have gained his favour in preference to their rivals. In regard to Marco, we may notice that, as on other occasions, he only displays the credulity of his age, and is merely repeating a distant hearsay, for we can see no ground to think with Mr Marsden that he ever visited Samarcand. The nephew here mentioned as hostile to the great khan is doubtless Kaidu, whom we have already seen (p. 108) making war against that

XXX.—Of the Province of Yarcan.

Yarcan is a province five days' journey in length. The people obey the law of Mohammed, but there are some Nestorian Christians; they are subject to the nephew of the khan mentioned above. All necessaries are in great abundance. Cotton is also grown, and the inhabitants are skilful artisans. They suffer severely by swellings in the legs and in the throat, occasioned by the bad quality of the water.* Finding nothing else worth mentioning, I shall go on to Cotan.

XXXI.—Of the great Province of Cotan.

Cotan is a province between north-east and east, and is eight days' journey in length. The people adore Mohammed; they have a number of cities and castles. The capital is a noble town, called by the name of the kingdom. They have all things in abundance, a large supply of silk, with vineyards and good orchards. They carry on merchandise and manufactures, but are not men at arms.†

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monarch, and the seat of whose power we shall afterwards ascertain to be in this part of Tartary.

This city, in the fourteenth century, acquired an extraordinary splendour, when Timur, after conquering the greater part of Asia, made it his capital; and his tomb, a lofty edifice, still adorns it. On the breaking up of his empire, it of course declined; and when the succeeding princes transferred their seat of government to Bokhara, it fell into such decay, that its once celebrated colleges were tenanted by wild beasts. (Izzut Oollah, in Oriental Magazine, Calcutta, vol. iv. p. 129.) Efforts have recently been made, and with some success, to restore it; yet Sir Alexander Burnes (vol. ii. p. 184) still reckons the population short of 10,000.

* Called elsewhere Carchan, Barcam, Karkan; but the name in the text (from the French) comes nearest to the usual modern one of Yarcund. This city was first known through our traveller, and since his time has acquired great additional importance in consequence of its conquest by the Chinese, who made it the exclusive seat of commerce on this frontier, as Canton and Kiachta elsewhere. The population is reckoned by Sir Alexander Burnes at 50,000. That writer mentions the disease called the guinea-worm as committing great ravages in Bokhara, and it may probably extend to this adjacent territory.

† This country, commonly called Khoten, by the Chinese

XXXII.—Of the Province of Pein.

Pein is a province five days' journey in length, between north-east and east. The people adore Mohammed, are subject to the great khan, and have a number of towns and castles. The noblest city and capital is called by the name of the kingdom. Here is a river in which are found the stones named jasper and calcedony. The people are very well supplied with necessaries, and grow a good deal of silk.* They live by merchandise and arts, and have a custom which I will now tell you. When a woman has a husband who has gone a journey, and is to be absent above twenty days, as soon as he has departed she takes another partner, being fully allowed by usage to do so; while the husband, in the place

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Yuthia, and in Sanscrit Kustana, was first pointed out to Europe by Marco, and is now well known as the finest tract in Eastern Turkestan. It is celebrated for its mild climate, the copious product of silk and wine, the industrious and peaceable character of the inhabitants. Most writers, like Marco, have given the same name to the capital; but Moorcroft's informant calls it Elchi, while Izzut Oollah (Oriental Magazine, vol. iv. p. 296) has it Aichi. It is said to contain 6000 houses, and there are reported to be in it and five other cities 102,000 inhabitants. (Moorcroft, vol. i. p. 367-369.) Ritter considers Khoten to contain in all about two and a half millions.—Asien, vol. vii. p. 353.

* The position of this city has hitherto defied conjecture; for though D'Anville has laid it down (seemingly too far east), he relied upon the data of our traveller. The following may throw some light on the subject:—Timkowski, among the cities of this quarter, mentions Ouchi with its dependencies, Aksou, Sairam, and *Bai* (vol. i. p. 390). This last, as in oriental names B and P may be considered identical, and *a* and *e* easily convertible, is in fact equivalent to Pei. Again, Moorcroft gives the itinerary of a merchant who seems to have followed nearly in the steps of Marco. He describes the river which waters Khoten as meeting with another, and the united stream flowing on for six days' journey, when it comes to *Bai*. This gives very precisely the position assigned by our traveller to Pein. The ornamental stones mentioned are found in the Khoten rivers, and as the waters flow on to Bai, are likely to occur there also. They are named by Moorcroft (vol. i. p. 375) jasper agate; by Timkowski, yu or oriental jade. The latter (vol. i. p. 395) relates that they are obtained in the bed of the stream by diving, and are variously coloured with white, green, yellow, and vermilion.

where he goes, takes another wife. Know that all the provinces now described from Cascar to the present, and still farther on, belong to Great Turkey. Now let us tell of a province named Ciarcian.

XXXIII.—Of the Province of Ciarcian.

Ciarcian is a province of Great Turkey, lying between north-east and east, with a capital city of the same name. The people adore Mohammed, and have a good number of towns and castles. There is a river bringing jasper and calcedony, which, being of excellent quality, they take to sell in Cathay, and thus make great profit. This province is sandy, as well as the whole road from Cotan hither; and much of the water is bad and bitter, but in various places it is good. When an enemy passes through the country, they flee with their wives, children, and cattle, two or three days' journey through the sand to places abounding in fine water and pasturage; and no one can tell where they have gone, because the wind blowing the sand obliterates all traces of their march, and they thus escape the invader. But when a friendly army passes through, they send away only the beasts, because the troops would take and eat them, without any payment.* After departing from Ciarcian, you go five days through the waste, finding the water bad and bitter, but occasionally sweet and good. At the end of these five days you come to a city which lies at the commencement of the great desert, wherein provisions are laid in for its passage, and therefore I must tell you about it.

* This place is the same called in the common maps Harashar, but by Izzut Oollah (Oriental Magazine, vol. iv. p. 293) and Moorcroft's informer, Karashehr, which is explained to mean the "Black City." It is described as seated on a large navigable river, formed by the junction of those flowing respectively from Khoten and Yarcund. Timkowski (vol. i. p. 388) describes it as abounding with good pasturage and water; but this probably applies only to the district around the capital. It seems odd that Mr Marsden should refer it to the Chen-chen of De Guignes, which he afterwards, with better reason, applies to a quite different territory.

XXXIV.—Of the City and Desert of Lop.

Lop* is a large city at the entrance of the great desert bearing its name, and lying between the east and north-east. It belongs to the khan, and the people adore Mohammed. You must know that those persons who wish to pass this tract rest in the city a week to refresh themselves and their cattle; then, having taken a month's provisions and provender, they enter upon the desert, which I assure you is so extensive that if a man were to travel through its whole length, it would employ a year; and even at its smallest breadth, a month is requisite.† It consists altogether of mountains and valleys of sand, and nothing is got to eat; but after travelling a day and a night, you find sweet water sufficient for from fifty to a hundred men, with their animals. A larger body could not be supplied. Thus, water is seen daily, or altogether in about twenty-eight places, and except in three or four it is good. Beasts or birds there are none, because they could not find food; but there is a great wonder which I must now tell you. When a party rides by night through this desert, and any one lags behind, or straggles from his companions through

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* The lake of Lop is a conspicuous feature shown in the Jesuits' map, and called by Timkowski (vol. i. p. 389) Lob-nor. It appears to be the final receptacle of the united streams flowing from Khoten, Yarcund, and Cashgar. The town of Lop is not any where mentioned; but it is probable there should be one on this site; and the present route, as we shall have again occasion to observe, is very little frequented.

† The great desert of Cobi or Shamo, extends from the sources of the Amour to the borders of Thibet, in a direction between north-east and south-west. The entire length cannot fall much short of 2000 miles, which perhaps could not easily be traversed in much less than a year. We never heard, however, of any one who followed such a course, the object being generally to cross it on the way to China. On this long line it varies much both as to breadth and sterility, generally increasing towards the south, and in proportion to its distance from the branches of the Altai. The quarter where it was crossed by Marco appears to have been peculiarly formidable, and we shall immediately observe that another has been more generally followed; but the present was probably chosen as the most direct.

sleep or any other cause, when he seeks to return to them, he hears spirits speak to him in such a manner that they seem to be his comrades, and they frequently call him by name, and thus lead him out of his way so that he never regains it, and many persons are thus lost and perish. I must tell you, too, that even by day you hear these voices of spirits, and even tambours, and many other instruments sounding.* They find it necessary, also, before going to rest at night, to fix an advanced signal, pointing out the course to be afterwards held; likewise to attach a bell to each of the animals, that they may be more easily kept from straggling. In this manner, amid much danger and fear, this desert is passed. Now we must tell you of the countries that lie on the other side.

XXXV.—Of the Province of Tangut and City of Sacchion.

When you have rode thirty days through this desert, you find a city named Sacchion,† which belongs to the

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* This passage no doubt bears a stamp of the age and region; yet when we consider the dreary situation of one who, in the depth of night, should be separated from his company in the midst of this vast wilderness, we can little wonder that the illusions here described should arise. Nor is it surprising that even during the day, when travelling amid the deep silence of the desert, mysterious noises should be conjured up or exaggerated. Mr Wood, in a somewhat similar tract, was assured, and found some reason to believe, that a peculiar sound accompanies the march of a caravan, arising seemingly from a stream of sand raised by the movement of so many animals. It was chiefly sensible on a slope; probably too where there is a mixture of flints or pebbles.—Pp. 181, 182.

In Ramusio this account is expanded into considerably greater extravagance. It is said—"In the night they are persuaded they hear the sound of a large cavalcade on the one side or the other of the road. Sometimes likewise by day the spirits assume the appearance of their travelling companions, who address them by name, and endeavour to conduct them out of the proper road. Some also are said, in crossing the desert, to have seen what appeared a body of armed men advancing towards them, and, apprehensive of being attacked and plundered, have taken to flight." It seemed unfair to our traveller to incorporate these statements with his text; but we have given the following sentence, which may be founded on real information.

† This is undoubtedly Cha-tcheou or Sha-shew, a sort of advanced post of China, on the eastern border of the desert.

khan. The province is called Tangut,* and the people are idolaters, mixed with some Nestorian Christians and Saracens. The first have languages of their own; they subsist not by merchandise, but by the grain which they produce from the earth. They have many abbeys and monasteries, all full of idols of various shapes, to which they offer frequent sacrifices and homage. Every man who has children rears a sheep, and at a particular festival at the end of the year, leads them along with that animal into the presence of the god, to whom they all perform reverence. They cook the sheep and offer it very humbly before the idol, leaving it while they make their prayers for the safety of their children. They then take the meat and carry it to the house, or wherever they please, send for their relations, and eat it with great joy and respect. They afterwards collect the bones, and preserve them with much diligence. You must know likewise, that when any one of them dies, his body is burned, and after he is carried to the place for this last ceremony, they erect in the middle of the path a house of cane, covered with cloths of silk and gold. When the dead man is laid before this ornamented house,

* Tangut is one of the most celebrated names in the history and geography of Asia during the middle ages. Klaproth (Journal Asiat. vol. xi. p. 461, &c.) estimates it as extending between 33° and 45° N. lat. and from 13° to 33° long. W. from Pekin. He considers it as including the country of the Eighurs, with the northern part of China as far as the Hoang-ho. He divides it into four provinces: Kamul, Barkoul (or Tchinsi), Turfan, and Ouroumpsi. It composed the once powerful kingdom of the Hia, a people who seem distinctly traced to their origin in Great Thibet. Being, according to Klaproth, driven thence, they migrated northward, and not only occupied this part of Central Asia, but overran afterwards a great extent of the empire. They brought with them from its central seat the Boodhist superstition, here indicated by the extensive monasteries and various rites. Marco thus proves his accurate observation; for, in crossing the desert, he had left behind him Turkestan, where the Mussulman faith had been generally established. De Guignes (quoted by Boni, vol. iv. p. 96) states their original name to have been Tanh-hiang, changed for the country into Tangut, and for the people into Hia. Their power was completely crushed by Gengis and his successors, and the very name of Tangut has gradually died away.

they place before him wine and victuals, believing that he will be similarly honoured in the other world. At the place of burning, too, they cut in paper, men, horses, camels, and coins of the size of bezants, convinced that the deceased will possess all these things in the future state. On this occasion, all the instruments in the land are sounded before the corpse. I must tell you, too, that after death the relations send for the astrologer, who is informed of the day, month, and year of his nativity, and then divines, by his diabolical art, the day on which the burning ought to take place. If it should be a week, a month, or six months, they keep it all that time, and never burn it till the appointed day. During this interval, they deposit it in a large box covered with cloth, and so preserved with crocus and other spices that no stench arises. Throughout this period, they place daily before the box meat and drink, and leave it there for some time, till they think he has eaten it. These sorcerers, too, often tell the relations that the dead body must not be carried out by the main door, but by a private one, or even through a breach made in the wall.* All the idolaters in the world proceed in this manner. Now I must go to another city which lies to the south, near the extremity of this desert.

XXXVI.—Of the City of Kamul.

Kamul† is a province, formerly a kingdom, containing

* Mr Marsden (p. 169) has quoted good authorities for the observance of these ceremonies in Thibet, the chief seat of the religion of the Lamas.

† Called also Khamil, softened by the Chinese to Hamil. The traveller here, and we suspect in his next chapter, evidently turns aside from his route to describe remarkable objects. This city being, as he justly states, north-west from Cha-tcheou, could not have been visited without a retrograde movement, and without again crossing and recrossing the desert. His father and uncle, however, might very likely have passed it in their journey out or home. Being, as here described, situated in a sort of oasis, it affords the means of crossing the waste with greater facility, and therefore, though circuitous, is generally preferred. It was taken by the ambassadors of Shah Rokh, and by Goez (Marsden, p. 173); also by Izzut Oolah. Moorcroft's inform-

cities and castles, with a capital of the same name. It stands between two deserts, the great one already described, and a smaller one, extending three days' journey. The people are all idolaters, and have a peculiar language; they live by the fruits of the earth, having enough to eat, and also to sell to the passenger. They are men of great gaiety, thinking of nothing but to sound musical instruments, to sing, dance, and delight their hearts. When a stranger comes to lodge in a house, the master is highly pleased, and leaves him with his wife, desiring her to treat him in every respect as a husband, while he himself goes and spends two or three days elsewhere. All the men of the province proceed in this manner, and do not account it any disgrace. The women are handsome, gay, and fond of diversion. Now, when Mangou Khan reigned as sire of the Tartars, it was reported to him how the people of Kamul gave over their wives to strangers, when he sent orders that, under a severe penalty, travellers should not be henceforth entertained in this manner. When they received this injunction, they were greatly grieved, held a council, and did what I will now tell you. They made up a large present, and sent it to Mangou, praying that he would allow them to treat their wives according to the custom handed down to them by their ancestors, who, for this kindness to strangers, had gained the favour of their idols, and their corn and other crops had greatly multiplied. When he heard this message, he said, "Since you are so bent on your own shame, let it be so." He allowed them, therefore, to do as they pleased, and hence they have always maintained this custom.*

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ant, after following our traveller's route to Karashehr, then struck northward to Ouchi, and thence crossed the desert to Kamul. (Vol. i. p. 378.) The latter, according to Timkowski (vol. ii. p. 386), is still equally frequented, the concourse of caravans giving it the appearance of a large capital.

* This degrading practice, as formerly observed, is but too common at great caravan-stations, especially where merchants remain a considerable time. Sir A. Burnes (vol. ii. p. 232)

XXXVII.—Of the Province of Ginghintalas.

Ginghintalas* is a province which is near the desert, between north and south, sixteen days' journey in extent, and subject to the great khan. It contains cities, castles, and three descriptions of men, idolaters, adorers of Mohammed, and Nestorian Christians. On the borders of it, towards the north, is a mountain containing a very abundant vein of copper and antimony. There is also one from which is made the salamander; but do not suppose this is the animal so called, for no creature can live in fire, because it is compounded of the four elements. It is only through ignorance that the salamander is called an animal; and a Turk, named Zurficar, who was very learned, and governor of this province for three years under the great khan, being much employed in working the mines, gave me an account of it. When this ore is taken from the mountain, and is broken, it strings together, and forms a thread like wool. Being then dried, pounded in a large mortar, and washed, there remains that thread of which I have spoken. Being then woven like wool, it forms cloth, which is dingy in colour at first, but when placed and left some time in the fire, it becomes white as snow, without dirt or stain. This is the truth of the salamander, and every thing else said about it is mere fable.† I can tell you, too, that at

mentions, that the system of temporary wives prevails even at Yarcund. The superstitious motive alleged was doubtless conjured up to conceal a still baser one. In Ramusio, it is asserted that they obeyed the command of the khan three years; but that the earth ceased to yield its accustomed fruits, and various unfortunate events occurred, which induced them to send the deputation mentioned in the text. No such statement is to be found in any early edition.

* In the Crusca and Pipino, Chinchitalas. De Guignes and Marsden suggest Chen-chen, or Leou-lan, to the south of Kamul. Count Boni points it out on the Jesuits' map, in about 40° N. lat. and 15° long., W. from Pe-king. I incline to mention Barkoul, called by the Chinese *Tchinsi*, a province of Tangut, elevated and cold, about 100 miles N. W. of Kamul. (Klaproth, as above; Ritter, Asien, vol. i. p. 379.) The expressions seem to indicate a site beyond Kamul, and the hilly character of the tract would accord better with its containing remarkable minerals.

† The later editions exhibit a striking proof of the manner

Rome there is a cloth which the great khan sent to the pope as a costly present, and the sudarium of our Lord was placed within it. Now let us tell you of other provinces to the south-east and east.

XXXVIII.—Of the Province of Succiur.

When you have departed from the province now described, you go ten days in the same direction. In all that way there are few habitations, nor does any thing occur worth mentioning. You then find a district called Succiur,* with a capital of the same name. The people are Christians, and idolaters, and under the great khan. All the three provinces last described belong to the general one named Tangut. Through all its mountains, rhubarb is found in great abundance, and the merchants purchase and carry it over the whole world.† They cannot, however, take this road through the mountains with any animals but those accustomed to the country, because a poisonous plant grows there, which, when eaten, causes the hoofs to drop off; but the native cattle, having learned its dangerous quality, carefully avoid it.‡ They live by the fruits of the earth, but attend little to merchandise. Now I must tell you of another city.

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in which the author has suffered by the corruption of his text. In Pipino and Ramusio the paragraph begins by saying, that "cloth is made of salamanders." This has been treated as an instance of gross credulity. In the present text, from the French and Crusca, the name of the animal is evidently introduced as a simile, and the idea of its actual existence treated with contempt. The mineral here mentioned is the asbestos, distinguished by its peculiar qualities of separating into threads which can be woven into cloth, and of being incombustible. It is now well known, and specimens are preserved in the British Museum and other places.

* In the French Suctuir, in Ramusio Succuir. The name in the text is taken from the Crusca, as coming nearest to that of the place undoubtedly meant, which is Sou-tcheou, the first on that extreme north-western part of the province of Shen-see which projects far out into Tartary.

† This plant is still produced here of peculiar excellence, and is a leading article in the trade with the Russians at Kiachta. Marsden, p. 180.

‡ This sentence occurs only in Ramusio, and Mr Marsden has not been able to find any confirmation of the fact.

XXXIX.—Of the Province of Canpicion.

Canpicion* is a great and noble town, chief and capital of the whole province of Tangut. The people are idolaters, and there are some who adore Mohammed, and also Christians who have three large and beautiful churches. The first have monasteries and abbeys according to their custom, with a very great number of idols, some of which, I assure you, are ten paces high, severally formed of wood, of earth, and of stone, all beautifully covered with gold and ivory. Their priests live more respectably than others, and guard themselves against luxury, though they do not hold it for a very great sin. They observe the lunar months like ours, and in one of them do not kill any beast or bird. For five days they eat no food that has had life, and live more strictly than usual. They take sometimes thirty wives, or as many as they have wealth to maintain, and give them a dowry in beasts, slaves, and money ; but the first wife ranks always as the principal.† If any of them do not please him, she may be divorced. They marry their cousins and even the wives of their father,

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* This city, called by Ramusio Campion, by the Persian ambassadors Kam-giou, by Goez Can-ceu, is Kan-tcheou, situated farther east in the same projecting part of Shen-see. Pétis de la Croix also calls it the capital of Tangut ; but perhaps he followed our traveller. According to Klaproth (Journal Asiat. vol. xi. p. 463), the residence of the sovereign of that country had been at Hing-tcheou, now Ning-hia ; but as his power had been for some time extinguished, Kan-tcheou was then probably the chief city of the region.

† Although our traveller had formerly described the Boodhist observances, he was struck by seeing them here on a greater scale than before. Large monasteries and gigantic images are its leading features, carried out always to the utmost extent that the means of the worshippers admit ; they would therefore be more ample in this great capital than in the former almost desert route. The practice of polygamy startles Mr Marsden, as being contrary to the precepts of this religion, and its practice in Thibet ; but there is no want of proof that the Tartars, while adopting its forms and observances, do not allow it to interfere with a habit so rooted among them as that of taking as many wives as they are able to support. Mr Marsden himself quotes Pallas for this observation, which is fully confirmed by Timkowski, vol. ii. p. 310.

and do not regard as sins many things which we account great ones; for they live like beasts: therefore let us leave them and go to the north. But I must tell you that Messeri Nicolo, Maffio, and Marco, remained in that city a year, on particular business which I need not enter into. We shall now go sixty days northwards.*

XL.—Of the Province of Ezina.

After riding twelve days, you come to a city named Ezina,† which is at the northern extremity of the desert of sand, and still in Tangut. The people, who are idolaters, breed camels and other beasts, and have falcons of different species and of good quality. They live by the fruits of the earth and cattle, and are also employed in merchandise. In this city, a man lays in provisions for forty days, during which time, travelling from Ezina northwards, there is neither habitation nor inns. But the people, except during summer, remain in the valleys; and in the mountains they find a number of wild beasts, especially asses: there are also pine-forests. At the end of these forty days they reach a northern province, and you shall hear what it is.

XLI.—Of the City of Karakorum.

Karakorum is a city three miles in circuit,‡ which was

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* The traveller appears at Kan-tcheou to close his itinerary into China, as no series of stations is thence given either to Kambalu, or to the place called Clemenfu, where the party found the emperor. He has taken advantage, however, of his long residence, either by excursions, or as we rather suspect by careful inquiry, to obtain information respecting the countries stretching from it in various directions; and these he now communicates.

† This city, though now ruined, is mentioned in the history of Gengis as one of great importance, and its capture in 1224 ranks among his important exploits. It is described as situated on a river flowing from the north, and falling into the Hoang-ho near Kan-tcheou.—Pétis de la Croix, p. 376.

‡ Our readers who have perused the narratives of Carpini and Rubruquis must be familiar with this celebrated Tartar capital. Its dimensions appear here exaggerated; but probably the space occupied by the tents of the erratic tribes is included. Even after the removal of the court to Pe-king, this place continued to possess great importance, being the residence of a

the first that the Tartars took when they issued from their country, and I am to tell you of their actions and manners, how they gained command, and spread themselves over the world. You must know that they dwelt in the north, about Ciorcia, in which region are great plains, and no abode in cities or castles, but good pasturage, large rivers, and abundance of water. They had no lords, yet paid tribute to the great sire, named in their language Unchan, whom we call Prester John, and who is spoken of over all the world. They paid to him one beast out of every ten; but they multiplied so greatly, that he became afraid of them, and resolved to separate them into different countries; for which purpose he sent his barons among them. The Tartars on hearing this were much grieved, and, holding a council, determined to flee through desert countries to the north, where he could not reach nor injure them. They then ceased to obey or pay tribute to him,* and remained thus for a long time.

XLII.—On Gengis, the first Khan of the Tartars.

Now it happened that, about 1187, the Tartars appointed a king, who was named in their language Gengis Khan. He was a man of great worth, sense, and prowess; and let me tell you, when he was elected, all the Tartars in the world that were scattered through those strange countries came and owned him as their lord. He maintained his power with great vigour, and the multitudes who ranged under his standard were almost innumerable. When he saw so numerous an army, he went conquering other countries, and made himself master of eight provinces; yet he neither injured nor robbed the people of any thing, but placing them under leaders in whom he

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governor who possessed the power of life and death. To this office Kublai, in 1293, named his grand son Temur. When that prince, however, succeeded to the throne, and removed to China, this Tartar capital sunk into decay, and we are not aware of any modern notice of its existence.—Ritter, Asien, vol. i. p. 561.

* According to the learned history of Pétis de la Croix, the first step in throwing off the yoke of Ouang Khan consisted in refusing to pay tribute to him.

could confide, led them on to other triumphs. Thus he overthrew, as you have heard, a multitude of nations; and seeing his good command and mildness, they cheerfully followed him, upon which he formed the design of subduing a great part of the world. In the year 1200, he sent a message to Prester John, asking his daughter to wife. Hereupon that monarch was very indignant, and said,—"What impudence is this in Gengis Khan? Knows he not that he is my man and my vassal? Return, and tell him that I would burn my daughter sooner than give her to him, and that he deserves to be put to death as a traitor and disloyal to his lord." He then desired the messengers to depart forthwith, and never return. They presently went away, and coming to their master, told him in order all that the other had said.

XLIII.—His Battle with Prester John, and Victory over him.

When Gengis Khan heard this boastful speech, his heart swelled, so that it almost burst within him; for you must know he was a man of very great pride. He then said to his minister, and to all about him, that he would not continue to hold the sovereignty, unless Prester John were made to pay more dearly for this villany than ever man did, and he must soon be made to see whether he was his vassal. Then he summoned round him the greatest army that ever was seen or heard of, and sent notice to Unchan that he must defend himself, as he was coming against him. When that prince knew certainly the approach of Gengis with so great a force, he made light of it, saying, they were not men-at-arms; yet resolved that should he approach, he would do all in his power to take and put him to death. He then ordered all his people to be prepared and summoned from many and strange parts, and a greater host and of more formidable aspect was never seen. And why make a long story? The khan, with all his people, came to a great and beautiful plain, named Tenduc, in Prester John's country, where he pitched his

camp, and rejoiced greatly to hear that his enemy was coming, because it was an excellent situation for giving battle. He sent for his astrologers, who were Christian and Saracen, and required to know which would conquer in that battle, he or his antagonist. The latter could tell nothing of the truth; but the former showed it openly; for they brought before him a cane, cut in the middle, and placed the two parts on different sides, and wrote the name of Gengis on one, and of Unchan on the other, telling him, that when they had made their enchantment, he whose cane should come above that of the other would conquer in battle. He desired that this should be shown to him as soon as possible. Then they took up the Psaltery, read certain portions, and performed their enchantment, when presently the cane on which was the name of Gengis, without any one touching it, joined the other, and mounted above it, and this was witnessed by all present. When he saw this, he was greatly rejoiced, and seeing that the Christians were men of truth, held them always in great honour.* Two days after, the armies engaged, and it was the greatest battle that ever was fought. The slaughter was terrible on both sides; but at length Gengis conquered, his enemy was slain in the engagement, and he himself became master of all his land. From that day he went on conquering many castles and provinces, and reigned six years; but, at the end of that time, he besieged a fort, named Cangui, where he was wounded in the knee by an arrow, and died. This was a great misfortune, for he was a brave and wise man.†

* In the edition of Pipino and all the subsequent ones to Ramusio inclusive, no mention is made of the Christians as concerned in this conjuration. Supposing these editors clergymen, they might have respectable motives for suppressing facts little honourable to the professors of this true faith. The text here given, however, being supported by all the early authorities (the two Paris editions, the Crusca and Pucci), appears undoubtedly genuine.

† We are obliged to observe, that the author's historical information does not display the accuracy usually found in his observations and descriptions. His early account of Gengis

XLIV.—On the Khans who reigned after the Death of Gengis.

After the death of Gengis, the next khan was Cui, the third Bacui, the fourth Alton, the fifth Mangou, the sixth Kublai,* who is greater and more powerful than all the rest; for the other five together had not so much power as this Kublai; nay, let me tell you, that all the emperors in the world, and all the Christian and Saracen kings, do not equal him, as is shown fully in our book. Now you must know that the great lords of the lineage of Gengis Khan are buried in a lofty mountain called Altai, and whenever the chief lords of the Tartars die, if it should be a hundred days' journey distant, they must be conveyed thither

exhibits indeed a rude conformity with the best histories, which do not themselves rest on any very assured basis. (See p. 43-47.) But his placing the death of that conqueror only six years after the conquest of this rival, and thus sixteen years before its real period (in 1226), appears, after all the excuses urged by Marsden and Boni, to be most extraordinary. Yet we can scarcely doubt that he would use the best means within his reach, and can only infer the gross ignorance which reigned in this splendid court, on subjects which might have been supposed most deeply to interest it. It appears, indeed, that no attempt was made to draw up a written history of the conqueror's exploits till the time of Ghazan Khan, whom our traveller visited on his return. A Mongol chief, called Poulad, then took extraordinary pains to collect all the traditions on the subject.—Marsden, p. 198.

* Our traveller has not redeemed his historical character by this list of the great khans, successors of Gengis. He has made five instead of the four whom our readers may recollect, Okkoday, Cuyné or Kuyuk, Mangou, and Kublai. Two of these five also appear to have been princes that never reigned; so that one is omitted. There is much appearance, however, as if these names had been tampered with by editors, with the view of accommodating them to preconceived ideas. Thus, Bakui, *French*; Backui, *Crusca*; Bacchia, *Pucci*, becomes in *Ramusio* Bathyn, identifying him with Baatu or Bathy, so well known by his invasion of Europe. I rather suspect him, however, to be Okkoday or Oktai, placed only by mistake after instead of before Cuyné. Again, Alton, *French*; Alcon, *Crusca*, becomes in *Riccardino* Alau; in *Gryneus* Allau, the name given elsewhere to Hoolaku, the conqueror of Bagdad. I should somewhat suspect the person meant to be Taulai or Tuli, the father of Kublai, who never, indeed, reached this supreme power; yet the report of his having done so might become popular in the court of his son.

to be interred. I will tell you another striking wonder; that when the bodies of the khans are carried to these mountains, the conductors put to the sword all the men whom they meet on the road, saying, "Go and serve the great lord in the other world;" and they do the same to the horses, killing also for that purpose the best he has. You must know that when Mangou died, more than 20,000 men were slain, who had been met on the road when his body was removed to be buried.*

XLV.—On the Religion, Customs, and Manners of the Tartars.

Now since I have begun speaking of the Tartars, I will tell you many things about them. They abide during winter in plains and warm situations, where there is abundant herbage for their cattle; and in summer they retire to cool places on mountains and high valleys, where water abounds. They have wooden houses covered with felt, of a round shape, which they convey with them wherever they go; for they have them so well bound with twigs as to be easily carried. Whenever they take down and set up a house, the gate is always placed to the south. They have waggons so well covered with black felt, that if it should rain the whole day, no water would reach any thing within; and they are drawn by oxen and camels. On the top they place their wives and children; and I must tell you that the ladies buy, sell, and perform all the work necessary for their husbands, who do nothing but hunt, hawk, and go to war. They live on flesh, milk, and the produce of hunting, and likewise on rats of Pharaoh,

* The custom of interring the Mongol chiefs at the Altai appears confirmed by the numerous golden ornaments which Pallas describes as having been dug out of tombs in that region. For the dreadful massacre here reported, neither Mr Marsden nor Count Boni have been able to find any other authority; but they insist upon that of our traveller being sufficient. Considering it, however, as only a hearsay statement from such informants, above fifteen years back, I feel inclined to consider it as vastly exaggerated. In Ramusio the number is only 10,000.

which are found here in great numbers.* They eat also the flesh of camels, dogs, and indeed of every kind of animal, and drink mare's milk. They shun the seduction of married females, as a most vile and shameful thing; and the wives are very faithful, performing extremely well the business of the household. Every man may take as many as he pleases, even to a hundred, if he can maintain them; yet they hold the first as the principal and most respectable. They scruple not to marry their cousins, and if the father dies, the eldest son may take all his wives, except his own mother; he marries also the widow of his deceased brother. They celebrate their marriages by great festivals.

The Tartars, who believe in a deity of a sublime and heavenly nature, burn incense in censers to him, and pray that he may preserve them in health of mind and body. They have also one called Nacygai, whom they call their earthly god, who guards their children, cattle, and corn. They fashion him of felt and cloth, keep him in their house, and pay him great honour and reverence. They make for him also a wife and children of cloth, placing the first on his left hand, and the latter in front. Before eating, they take the fat meat and anoint his mouth with it; then lay bread before the door of his chamber. Having done this, they say that their god and his family have had their share, and sit down to their own meals. I told you that they drink mare's milk, but it is in such a manner that it seems white wine, being of an agreeable taste, and called *chemius*.† The wealthy wear rich robes of gold and silk, with varied furs of the ermine, sable, and fox. Their har-

* These animals are described by Bell and Du Halde as a species of marmot, of a brownish colour, that burrow in the hills of this part of Asia. Our traveller identifies them with the ichneumon, popularly called the mouse or rat of Pharaoh. The Crusca has *pomi* (apples) of Pharaoh, an evident mistake. The Paris Latin makes a very strange one, dropping the rats, and translating faraon *farrum*, grain, the representing of which as abundant would have been indeed most erroneous.

† Koumiss, a well-known fermented preparation of mare's milk, used by all the Tartar nations.

ness is beautiful and of great value; their arms are bows, swords, and clubs; but the first is more used than the others, because they are excellent archers. On their back they wear armour of buffalo and other very strong hides.

I will tell you the manner in which they maintain justice. If a man has stolen an article of little value, they give him seven lashes, or seventeen, or twenty-seven, going on thus always to three hundred and seven,* and many die under them. If he steals a horse or any thing else for which he deserves to die, he is cut through the middle with a sword; yet if he can pay nine times the value of what he has stolen, he is allowed to live. Every lord or other man, who owns oxen or any cattle, makes them be marked with his seal, and then allows them to feed on the plains or among the mountains; and whoever finds one straying brings it to him whose mark is upon it. The sheep and lambs, however, are guarded by a shepherd. Their cattle are all remarkably large, fat, and beautiful. They have another wonderful custom which I had forgot; for when two men have one a son, the other a daughter, dead at the age of four, they marry them together, and represent the union by cards, which they set on fire, and when they see the flame and smoke ascending, they make great shouts and run backward and forward, saying that the dead are going to their children in the other world, and are to be husband and wife there. They do more, for they paint on cards the similitudes of men, horses, cloths, bezants, and harness, then burn them, and say that all these things will be possessed by their children in the other world.†

XLVI.—On their Wars, and the Order of their Armies.

The Tartars are good men-at-arms in battle, capable

* In Ramusio, the numbers are 7, 17, 27, 37, 47, and so on to a hundred.

† Mr Marsden, p. 219, has quoted from Navarette and Sir John Malcolm testimonies to the existence of this extraordinary custom in Tartary and the parts of China bordering on it.

of much endurance; and they can go through more warlike toil than other men. Often, when necessary, one of them will remain a month without any food, except the milk of a mare and the flesh of animals killed by him in hunting, his horse feeding on the grass, without his needing to bring barley or straw. He is very obedient to his master, and when necessary will remain the whole night armed on horseback. They are the men in the world most capable of enduring fatigue and trouble, subsisting at the least expense, and best fitted for conquering lands and kingdoms. They arrange their armies in the following manner. When a Tartar lord goes to war, he has with him 100,000 men. He places a chief over every ten, every hundred, every thousand, every ten thousand, so that each officer, even the commander of the hundred thousand, has to deal only with ten persons; for he gives his orders to the chiefs of ten thousand, they to those of one thousand, they to those of a hundred; and thus every man answers to his captain. The hundred thousand is called a tut, and ten thousand a toman.* When the armies are marching through plains and mountains, they send 200 men two days in advance, also behind and on each side, so that they cannot be attacked by surprise. And when they are marching a long way they carry no baggage, but merely two large leathern bags, in which they put their milk, and a little earthen pot for cooking their victuals. They take a small tent, under which they remain during rain. And I tell you also, that when necessary they ride full ten days without food, and without lighting a fire; but piercing a vein of their horse, they drink his blood. They have likewise their milk dried into a species of paste, which, when about to use, they stir till it becomes liquid and can be drunk. When they go to battle with their enemies, they conquer

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* In Ramusio, the tut or tuc is made 100, and the toman 1000. The number of 10,000 assigned to the latter, given in the text from the French version, is undoubtedly the correct one.—Marsden, p. 215. The *Crusca* omits the toman.

in this manner: they apparently betake themselves to a shameful flight, for they have so trained their horses that they turn round and round like dogs. And when they are fleeing and hotly pursued, they fight as well as when they face the enemy; for in their swiftest flight they wheel about and discharge their arrows, which kill both men and horses of the opposite army, who, when they think their adversaries discomfited and vanquished, fall themselves one after the other. When the Tartars have thus made a great slaughter, they turn and rush on so violently, that they soon gain a complete triumph. All that I have told you here applies to the genuine Tartars; but they are now much altered; those who live in Cathay have adopted the manners and customs of the idolaters; those in the Levant imitate the Saracens.* I have said nothing here

* The reader who has followed the accounts of this people given by Carpini and Rubruquis will be able to compare them with that here furnished. Theirs is fuller, and drawn from more intimate inspection at a time when the inhabitants were more unmixed than they are here stated to have become after the conquest of China. Our traveller's description is evidently not copied from them, yet exhibits so close a coincidence as is creditable to both parties. They had mentioned that in the field every species of stratagem was studiously resorted to. The statement here made that they systematically fought flying, though it has passed into popular belief, is probably exaggerated.

Having in the course of this volume heard so much of the Tartars, the reader may not be unwilling to learn something of their present state, as recently observed by Timkowski; in whose eyes they appeared to retain all the habits which might enable them again to overrun and desolate the world. They are, however, held in subjection by China, and their irregular hordes could not now make head against a disciplined force. Room is thus left only for the display of their most amiable qualities: kindness in their families,—generosity and hospitality to strangers. Their tents are still similarly constructed; milk, with occasionally a little mutton, continues to be their staple food. They have been generally converted to the Shaman superstition, which has gained possession of nearly all Eastern Asia; yet they have not the means of celebrating its rites with the same pomp as elsewhere. Its priests are as usual called in to perform magical cures; but they have introduced among this rude race some tincture of books and literature.—Travels, vol. ii. p. 295-347.

of the mighty acts of the great khan, the sire of all the Tartars, nor of his splendid imperial court; for these wonderful things are described elsewhere in this book. But let us now return to our route on the great plain where we were when we began to speak of their actions.

XLVII.—On the Plains of Bangu, and the extreme Parts of the North.

When you depart from Karakorum, and from Altai, where the khans are interred, as I have related above, you go northwards through a country which is called the plain of Bangu, and continues during a journey of forty days. The inhabitants, who are called Mecri, and are very savage, live on the flesh of animals, chiefly deer, nay I assure you that they ride upon these animals. Their customs resemble those of the Tartars, and they are subject to the great khan. They have neither corn nor wine, but in summer abundance of beasts and birds for hunting and hawking; though in winter none remain in the country on account of the intense cold. After travelling these forty days you come to the ocean; and there is found a mountain, where the peregrine falcons build their nests. You must know this place contains neither men nor women, nor beasts, nor any birds, except one species, which is called *barghenlac*, on which the hawks feed. They are of the size of partridges, have feet like parrots, and tails like swallows, and they fly very swiftly. When the great khan wishes peregrine falcons, he sends thither for them. In an island of that sea, too, are bred the gerfalcons; and I assure you the place is so far north, that the polestar remains behind, and is seen to the south. Those birds are bred on that isle in such abundance, that the great khan obtains as many as he pleases; while others are conveyed to Argon and other lords of the East.* Now that

* The country here described is evidently the eastern part of Siberia; and though the account is given only from distant hearsay, it is by no means incorrect. The dreariness of its aspect, the absence of culture, the disappearance in winter of

I have told you of these northern provinces as far as the ocean, let us return to Canpicion.

XLVIII.—On the great City of Erginul.

When a man departs from that city, he goes five days eastward through a country where there are many spirits, who are often heard speaking during the night. You then find a kingdom called Erginul,* belonging to the great khan, and included in the large province of Tangut. There are a good many towns, the chief one bearing the same name; and the people are a mixture of Nestorian Christians, idolaters, and Mohammedans. Proceeding thence south-east, you come into the country of Cathay, when you will find in the way a city named Singuy.† There are a good many other towns, still in

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animals, even of the rein-deer, are all characteristic features. The shores of the northern ocean in this quarter are very little known to ourselves, but are doubtless as desolate as described, and the rocks are likely to be tenanted by powerful birds of prey. The search after these to gratify the passion for falconry, then universal among the Tartar chiefs, was evidently the impulse which led to the opening of this route. The barghenlac cannot be identified; and it seems scarcely probable that it should be the only bird; yet we have very little means of judging.

In Ramusio, it is said that the gerfalcons sent from Europe are not conveyed to the great khan, but only to some of the Tartar or other chiefs of the East. There is nothing of this in the early editions.

* Marco, having finished his northern excursion, begins another in a different direction, the tracing of which is attended with some difficulty. This and the two following districts, however, are expressly mentioned by Pétis de la Croix (p. 481) as parts of Tangut, which Gengis held in subjection; there can be no doubt, therefore, that these existed and were known under the names by which he describes them. Mr Marsden supposes Erginul to be Kokonor, but seemingly on no good ground, the distance being, as he admits, much greater than here stated, and the direction south-south-west, instead of east. The Jesuits' map exhibits, in exactly the position indicated, a place called Nguei-yuen. If we just make the not unusual change of the first N into R, the names will sound very similar. The Paris Latin has Erguyl; the Italian MS. Ergiuul.

† Mr Marsden supposes this to be Si-ning, a well-known station on the frontier of China Proper. Boni, however, observes, that from a place five days' journey east of Kan-tcheou, the route thither would be due south. He conceives, therefore,

Tangut, and subject to the great khan; and the inhabitants are as above described. There are a vast number of wild oxen, as large as elephants, and very beautiful,—their back being entirely covered with white and black hair, three palms long. These animals are also caught and tamed, when they do twice as much work as the common ox.* This country, too, produces the best musk in the world, and I will describe the animal by which it is supplied. It is small, about the size of an antelope, which it resembles in the feet and tail, but has a soft thick hair like the stag, no horns, only four teeth, two above and two below, three inches long and very sharp. It is a beautiful creature; and, on its being taken, there is found a bag between the skin and the flesh, containing a bloody imposthume, which, when the skin is cut through, is drawn out, and forms the musk whence issues so strong an odour.† In this country it is very abundant, and of good quality. The people also raise plenty of corn, and engage in merchandise and manufactures. The region extends to a journey of full twenty-five days. There are pheasants twice as large as ours, with tails from seven to ten palms long.‡ Others re-

with seeming probability, the city here mentioned to be Si-ngan, capital of Shen-see. That extensive province, stated afterwards to be twenty-five days' journey in length, appears here correctly described. Its fertility and populousness are combined with a degree of rudeness which makes it approximate to the neighbouring districts of Tartary. Mr Marsden urges in support of his view the statement of its being still in Tangut; but, as we have already observed, this name was then extended as far as the Hoang-ho, and consequently included Shen-see.

* This is the yak or *bos grunniens*, having its shoulders and tail covered with a profusion of soft black hair; an appendage which must augment its apparent size, here somewhat exaggerated. It more properly belongs to Thibet; but Du Halde, in describing Shen-see, intimates its occurrence here, by mentioning the number of wild bulls and the manufacture of *cow's hair*.

† The musk animal also belongs peculiarly to Thibet; but, like the other, appears introduced by Marco in treating of the country where he first saw it. It is elsewhere repeatedly mentioned. In Ramusio, the bag is said to be formed at the time of full moon; but this fabulous statement is not in the early editions.

‡ The fine pheasants of China, with the length of their beauti-

semble ours; and there are various birds, with finely coloured wings. The people, who are idolaters, are fat, with small noses, black hair, and no beard unless on the chin. The ladies have no hair except on the head, and are every way very handsome. The men are voluptuous, and are authorized by their law and usage to take as many wives as they can maintain. If a woman is beautiful, though of humble birth, a great baron readily espouses her, giving to her mother such a sum of money as may be agreed on.

XLIX.—On the Province of Egrigaia.

When a man departs from Erginul, and goes eight days eastward, he finds a province of Tangut called Egrigaia,* where there are cities and castles, and the chief one is named Calacian.† The people are idolaters; yet there are three towns held by Nestorian Christians. They are subject to the great Tartar; and in this city is made cloth of camels' hair, the most beautiful and valuable in the world. There is a kind of wool whence they manufacture very fine white camlets in great quantities.

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ful tails, have of late years attracted the attention of Europe, and adorned its menageries.—See Account of China, Edinburgh Cabinet Library, vol. iii. p. 418.

* The traveller, now returning to Erginul, proceeds eastward to the place here named, of which Mr Marsden can find no trace unless in the Eighur country; but this lies in quite a different direction. M. Klaproth (Jour. Asiat. vol. xi. p. 63) observes that Hing-tcheou, now Ninghia, the residence of the former sovereign of Tangut, was called, in the language of that country, Eyirkiai, which he supposes with great probability to be the Egrigaia of our traveller. In fact, if we take Erginul to be Nguei-yuen, we shall find it to be exactly in the specified distance and direction from that place.

† Marsden suggests that Calacia may be the Cailac of Rubruquis, or Cialis of Goez; which Count Boni justly rejects as admitted to be at an immense distance from the territory here treated of. He suggests, seemingly on good grounds, Calatu, a place on D'Anville's map, some distance north of Ninghia, and on a branch of the Hoang-ho, in the most northerly part of its course. Our traveller now enters upon a third detached itinerary, to illustrate interesting objects adjacent to those of which he has been treating.

These the merchants convey by many routes to Cathay and other parts throughout the world. Now let us go to Tenduc, in the territory of Prester John.

L.—On the Province of Tenduc, and of Gog and Magog.

Tenduc is a province towards the east,* where there are cities and castles, and the chief one bears the same name. The people belong to the great khan, like all those formerly subject to Prester John. In this province there is a king named George, descended from that prince, and who indeed enjoys his power. He holds the land under the khan, but only a part of that which was possessed by his ancestor. I assure you, however, that the khans have often given their daughters and female relations to the reigning kings of this line. In this province are found the stones whence azure is made; they are plentiful and good. Camlets, too, are woven of camels' hair. The natives live on cattle and the fruits of the earth, and have likewise some merchandise and manufactures. The Christians, as already mentioned, are masters of the land;† but there are also idolaters and worshippers of Mohammed. There is likewise a people

* Tenduc is mentioned by Pétis de la Croix (p. 34) as one of the most extended tracts of Karakithay. This name, meaning the Black Cathay, belonged to a district occupied by numerous Chinese, who, when their country was overrun by the Leao and the Kin, sought new settlements in the wilds of Tartary. They filled a long territory to the south of Mongolia and north of Tangut, and reaching apparently farther eastward than is represented in the map of M. D'Avezac. They introduced into this wide region a degree of culture and population to which it was before a stranger; but which, amid subsequent revolutions, it has been unable to support. It yielded, however, to the arms of Ouang Khan, and was incorporated into his dominions; afterwards, with the others, it was annexed to the empire of Gengis. Mr Marsden's idea of any connexion with the Tungusi appears quite unfounded.

† We have mentioned elsewhere the widely prevailing report of Ouang Khan being a Christian sovereign, and therefore named Prester John. The statement now made tends to confirm it. We may notice also the letter to the Pope from Juan de Monte Corvino, who boasts of having baptized the son of Prince George here mentioned.—Marsden, p. 244.

called Argon, meaning in French Guasmul, that is, mixed of two different races. They are handsomer than the others, more prudent and commercial. Know that in this province was the chief seat of Prester John, when he ruled over the Tartars and all the surrounding countries; and this George is the sixth in succession from him. This, too, is the place which we in our country call Gog and Magog, but they call it Ung and Mungul;* and in each province was a different race of people,—in Ung were the Gog, and in Mungul dwelt the Tartars.

When a man rides through that province seven days eastward towards Cathay, he finds many cities and castles. The inhabitants are Mohammedans, idolaters, and Christians; they carry on trade, and manufacture fine gilded cloths, called *nascisi*, with various kinds of silk cloth, and are subject to the great khan. There is a city named Sindacui, with many manufactures of harness and trappings necessary for an army. In the mountains of that country is a place named Idifu, where there is a very productive silver mine. They have no want of beasts and birds for hunting. Now let us depart from this province and its cities, and travel three days, when we shall find a town named Cianganor, in which is a fine palace of the great khan [already described, p. 136].

LI.—On the City of Chandu.

Departing from this city, and travelling three days between north and north-east, you come to another named Chandu,† built by Kublai, the great khan now

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* Gog and Magog were celebrated in the Middle Ages, especially among the Saracens, as two mighty giants who held a fortified station in the north of Asia. The resemblance of their names to Ung and Mungul, with a corresponding roughness of character, seems to have suggested the present crude theory respecting their identity.

† The position of this place seems to admit of no doubt, since Gerbillon, in 1691, while accompanying the emperor on an excursion into Mongolia, visited its ruins. He mentions them under the name of Shangtu, as those of the country palace of

reigning. Here he has built a most magnificent palace. [This, too, was formerly described when treating of the mode of life and hunting residences of that great monarch, p. 133, &c.]

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the emperors of the Yuen dynasty, as the Chinese termed that founded by Kublai. The position is in lat. 40° 22′ N. N. E. of Pe-king. Gerbillon particularly notices the great abundance of every species of game. Its position must determine the preceding one of Cianganor, from which it is stated to lie three days' journey north-east. In that precise site we find a cluster of lakes, with several rivers agreeing exactly with the description given in Part I. Chap. xxiv. Besides the itinerary data, every particular shows the two places to be closely adjacent. I cannot, therefore, but much wonder that Mr Marsden should fix it, on a mere rude resemblance of name, in the Chahan-nor, or White Lake, situated, as he admits, at a very great distance. M. Ritter (Asien, vol. i. p. 141) suggests the *Taal* nor, which is indeed nearer; but still more than three days distant. It lies, besides, due north, instead of south-west, as stated by our traveller, whose authority therefore must be entirely thrown aside if we adopt either of these suppositions. Indeed, I cannot but remark, that Mr Marsden has been peculiarly unsuccessful in tracing the positions on this frontier, so that, were it not for the aids of Count Boni and M. Klaproth, I should have found myself much at a loss. This failure appears to have arisen chiefly from his unfortunate habit of supposing himself at liberty, where he could find the slightest resemblance in name and description, to suppose his author guilty of the most enormous errors as to distance, direction, and position. In a note on one of these chapters he agrees with Forster, that "Marco Polo does not point out the situation of his places in the proper order, but goes from one to another just as his fancy leads him." It is hoped, however, that reason has now been given for believing that most of these alleged mistakes are in fact those of his editors and interpreters.

PART III.

Voyage through the Indian Seas, and Historical Accounts of Western Asia.

Chinese Navigation to India—Description of Japan—Expedition sent thither by Kublai—The Oriental Archipelago ; its Produce of Gold and Spices—Visit to Tsiompa—War between the King and Kublai—Account of Java—Malacca—Arrival at Sumatra—Voyage round the Island—The different Kingdoms—Savages of the Interior—Produce of Palm-toddy, Camphor, Sago—The Andaman and Nicobar Islands—Ceylon ; its Pearls and Rubies—Superstitious Legends of the People—Coast of Maabar or Coromandel—Various Customs and Superstitions—Masulipatam ; its fine Cloths—The Diamond Mines—Madras and the Legend of St Thomas—The Bramins and their various Orders and Observances—Cail, Coilon ; Comari (Cape Comorin)—Eli or Dely—Malabar Coast—Dreadful Piracies—Tana and Cambaia—Sumnaut (Guzerat)—Mention of Mekran—Polo gives Reports collected respecting Africa—Socotra ; Whale-fishery—Madagascar ; fabulous Rumours—Confounded with Southern Africa—Zanguebar ; why considered an Island—Abyssinia ; its Description—Wars with Adel—Arabia, Aden, Shaher, Dofar, Kalhat—Return to Ormus—Undertakes to relate the Revolutions of Western Asia—Kaidu, Prince of Samarcand—His Wars with Kublai—Exploits of his heroic Daughter—His Contest with Argon, Prince of Persia—Various Adventures of Argon, who is defeated and made Prisoner, but afterwards raised to the Persian Throne—His Death—Reigns of Quiacatu and Baidu—The latter vanquished by Ghazan, Son to Argon—Tartar Kingdom in Siberia ; Dog-sledges ; fine Furs—Region of Obscurity in the North—Russia—Black Sea and neighbouring Countries—Succession of Tartar Princes on the Volga—Great War between Barka and Hoolaku—Another between Toctai and Nogai—Conclusion.

I.—India and the Ships navigating thither.

Having described so many inland provinces, I will now enter upon India, with the wonderful objects in that

region. The ships in which the merchants navigate thither are made of fir,* with only one deck, but many of them are divided beneath into sixty compartments, in each of which a person can be conveniently accommodated. They have one rudder and four masts; while some have two additional, which can be put up and taken down at pleasure. Many of the largest have besides as many as thirteen divisions in the hold, formed of thick planks mortised into each other. The object is to guard against accidents which may cause the vessel to spring a leak, such as striking on a rock or being attacked by a whale. This last circumstance is not unusual; for during the night the motion of the ship through the waves raises a foam that invites the hungry animal, which, hoping to find food, rushes violently against the hull, and often forces in part of the bottom. The water, entering by the leak, runs on to the well, which is always kept clear; and the crew, on perceiving the occurrence, remove the goods from the inundated division, and the boards are so tight that it cannot pass to any other. They then repair the injury and replace the articles. The planks are double, fastened with iron nails, and plastered without and within, but not secured by pitch, of which the people are destitute. They therefore take lime, beat it into fine powder, and mix it with an oil from trees, so that it becomes equal to glue. These vessels carry two hundred mariners, and five or six thousand loads of pepper; they are moved by oars, on each of which four hands are employed. Every one of them has two barks, large enough to carry a thousand loads, and forty seamen well armed, who often assist in dragging the large ships.

* Mr Marsden does not believe that timber of this species can be accessible to the Chinese shipbuilder. He does not perhaps duly consider, that amid the elaborate cultivation, forests are allowed to grow only on the loftiest mountain-ridges. These, in the south especially, reach quite an Alpine height, and must have a cold climate suited to northern trees. The produce is easily conveyed down to the coast by the numerous rivers and canals.—Historical Account of China (Edinburgh Cabinet Library), vol. i. p. 19; vol. ii. pp. 232, 233.

Ten small boats are also kept for fishing and various other services; two being attached to each bark. When the ships have sailed a year, and stand in need of repair, a fresh plank is fastened above the two others, then nailed and cemented, till they sometimes acquire a depth of six planks.* Having thus described the merchant-vessels that go to India, I will tell you of the country itself; but first I must mention the many isles in this sea lying to the eastward; and first, of one named Zipangu.

II.—Island of Zipangu, and Tartar Expedition thither.

This is a very large island, fifteen hundred miles from the continent.† The people are fair, handsome, and of agreeable manners. They are idolaters, and live quite separate, entirely independent of all other nations. Gold is very abundant, and no man being allowed to export it, while no merchant goes thence to the mainland, the people accumulate a vast amount. But I will give you a wonderful account of a very large palace, all covered with that metal, as our churches are with lead. The pavement of the chamber, the halls, windows, and every other part, have it laid on two inches thick,‡ so that the riches of this palace are

* The division into compartments completely detached from each other, and the use of a cement composed of lime and oil, is still the system upon which Chinese junks are constructed. Historical Account of China (Edinburgh Cabinet Library), vol. ii. pp. 239, 240. The mention of whales, and of the proceedings in case of a leak, are found only in Ramusio. The advantage stated in the latter case is obvious and important; but we are not aware of accidents from whales being usual in the Chinese Sea.

† This is evidently Japan. The nearest part of the northern island is reckoned by Mr Marsden (p. 572), rather seemingly too low, at only 500 miles. Chinese *li* (about a third of a mile) may have been meant; or the writer might refer to the most central part of the group.

‡ The extent and productiveness of this empire, with the studied exclusion of foreigners, are circumstances well known. The gold mines are described as very considerable, and monopolized by the sovereign. The modern palace is not represented as so richly covered with gold; but authorities, both European

incalculable. Here are also red pearls, large, and of equal value with the white, with many other precious stones.* Kublai, on hearing of this amazing wealth, desired to conquer the island, and sent two of his barons with a very large fleet containing warriors, both horsemen and on foot. One was named Abatan, the other Vonsanicin, both wise and valiant. They sailed from Zai-tun and Kin-sai, reached the isle, landed, and took possession of the plain and of a number of houses; but they had been unable to take any city or castle, when a sad misadventure occurred. A mutual jealousy arose amongst them, which prevented their acting in any concert. One day when the north wind blew very strong, the troops expressed to each other apprehensions, that if they remained, all the vessels would be wrecked. The whole then went on board and set sail. When they had proceeded about four miles, they found another small isle, on which, the storm being violent, a number sought refuge. Others could not reach it, many of whom suffered shipwreck and perished; but some were preserved and sailed for their native country. Those who had landed, 30,000 in number, looked on themselves as dead men, seeing no means of ever escaping; and their anger and grief were increased, when they beheld the other ships making their way homeward.

The sovereign and people of the large isle rejoiced greatly when they saw the host thus scattered and many of them cast upon the islet. As soon as the sea calmed, they assembled a great number of ships, sailed thither and landed, hoping to capture all those refugees. But when the latter saw that their enemies had disembarked, leaving the vessels unguarded, they skilfully retreated to another quarter, and continued moving about till they reached the ships, and went on board without

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and Chinese, state this ornament to have been formerly employed much more profusely.—Marsden, pp. 572, 573.

* Count Boni quotes Thunberg and Olivier de Nort, both for the abundance of pearls in Japan and for their red colour. This tint is observed even in a few of those found in Ceylon. —Marsden, p. 573.

any opposition. They then sailed direct for the principal island, hoisting its own standards and ensigns. On seeing these, the people believed their own countrymen had returned, and allowed them to enter the city. The Tartars, finding it defended only by old men, soon drove them out, retaining the women as slaves. When the king and his warriors saw themselves thus deceived, and their city captured, they were like to die of grief; but they assembled other ships, and invested it so closely as to prevent all communication. The invaders maintained it seven months, and planned day and night how they might convey tidings to their master of their present condition; but finding this impossible, they agreed with the besiegers to surrender, securing only their lives.* This took place in the year 1269. The great khan, however, ordered one of the commanders of this host to lose his head, and the other to be sent to the isle where he had caused the loss of so many men, and there put to death. I have to relate also a very wonderful thing, that these two barons took a number of persons in a castle of Zipangu, and because they had refused to surrender, ordered all their heads to be cut off; but there were eight on whom they could not execute this sentence, because these wore consecrated stones in the arm between the skin and the flesh, which so enchanted them, that they could not die by steel. They were therefore beaten to death with clubs, and the stones, being extracted, were held very precious.† But I must leave this matter and go on with the narrative.

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* Both in the Chinese and Japanese annals, this expedition is related, and represented as having been rendered abortive by disastrous shipwreck. In particulars, however, they differ from each other; while our traveller, having been in China when the news arrived, had the best opportunities of gaining information. There is no reason to suppose, therefore, that his more detailed account may not be generally correct.

† The delusion of supposing persons rendered invulnerable by the use of amulets, is stated by Mr Marsden (p. 575) to be common in the oriental islands; and an instance is mentioned when the Portuguese were imposed upon by it.

III.—Idolatry and Cruelty of the Japanese.

The idolaters of Cathay, of Manji, and of these isles, have all a uniform worship; their idols have heads respectively of the dog, the hog, the sheep, and various other animals. Some have a head and four faces, others three heads, one in the proper place, and one on each shoulder. Certain images have four, ten, and even a thousand hands, and these last are held in peculiar reverence. When the Christians ask them why they form idols in so strange a manner, they reply,—"Our ancestors left them to us, and we will leave them to our children." The actions of these beings are so various and diabolical, that they must not be mentioned in this book, because it would be a wicked thing in Christians to read them.* I shall only mention, that any idolater of these isles, when he captures an enemy, who cannot procure a ransom in money, invites his friends, who cook and eat the prisoner, reckoning his flesh the most delicate food that can be obtained.†

IV.—Sea of China, and numerous Islands.‡

You must know, that the gulf containing this island

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* The religion of Boodh, long the most popular in China, has also been extensively diffused through Japan, so that the superstitions of the two countries are correctly represented as similar. The deformed and multiform idols, either native or introduced from India, are also common. Thunberg mentions many in the temples at Miaco, each brandishing from twenty to forty-six arms.

† This report, though probably quite unfounded, is not unlikely to have arisen during the imbittered war waged between the Tartars and Japanese.

‡ Ramusio begins this chapter thus: "Departing from the port of Zai-tun, and sailing a westerly course inclining to the south, for 1500 miles, you pass the gulf named Keinan, the navigation along the northern shore of which occupies two months. It bounds the southern part of Manji, and then approaches the countries of Arica, Toloman, and many others already mentioned." Mr Marsden admits that the period of two months is too large, and that the numerous and distant coasts mentioned in the chapter are improperly stated as within the gulf, whereas they evidently include all those belonging to the Indian archipelago. Neither of these errors appears in

is called that of Zin, meaning in their language the sea opposite to Manji. According to skilful and intelligent mariners, who have made the voyage, it contains 7448 isles, mostly inhabited. In all these there grows no tree which is not agreeably fragrant, and also useful, being equal or superior in size to the lignum aloes. They produce also many and various spices, including pepper white like snow, as well as the black. They yield also much gold, and various other wonderful and costly productions;* but they are very distant and difficult to reach. The mariners of Zai-tun and Kin-sai, who visit them, gain indeed great profits; but they spend a year on the voyage, going in winter, and returning in the summer; for the wind in these seasons blows only from two different quarters, one of which carries them thither, and the other brings them back.† But this country is immensely distant from India. You may observe, too, that though the sea be called Zin, it is really the ocean, just as we say the sea of England, the sea of Rochelle.‡ The great khan has no power over these islands. Now let us return to Zai-tun, and resume our narrative.

V.—Of Cianba, and Expedition thither.

On leaving that port, and sailing west and somewhat south-west 1500 miles, you reach a country named Cian-

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our text, taken from the early editions. The mention, however, of Keinan (evidently Hai-nan) shows some kind of information in the person who inserted the passage in Ramusio.

* The number stated is doubtless fanciful and exaggerated; yet when we consider the various groups composing the oriental archipelago,—many consisting of numerous islets,—the whole amount must be very great. They are, as here justly noticed, productive beyond any other part of the world in aromatic and odoriferous plants, also very rich in gold.

† The distance would not be very formidable to a British mariner, but is otherwise to the ruder Chinese navigator; while this sea, too, is tempestuous and dangerous. The junks still perform only one voyage in the year; and, as here correctly stated, sail in the winter with the north-east monsoon, and return in summer with the south-west one.—Marsden, p. 582.

‡ The object seems here to be, to distinguish the ocean and its branches from a great lake or enclosed sea, like the Caspian. In Ramusio we have the Egean Sea, instead of that of Rochelle.

ba,* which is very rich and extensive. The people are idolaters, have a language of their own, and a king, who pays tribute to the great khan, but only in fine elephants peculiar to the country. That monarch, seeking to subdue him, sent, in 1278, one of his barons with many men, horse and foot, who began to lay waste the country. The sovereign, who was very aged and much afraid of such powerful warriors, did not venture to engage them on the open plain, remaining secure in strong cities and fortresses; but all the lands and houses were wasted and destroyed. Grieved at the desolation of the territory, he sent messengers, who said to the great khan, "Sir, the King of Cianba salutes you as his liege lord, and states himself to be a man of great age, who has long preserved his kingdom in peace. He offers to be your vassal, and pay a liberal tribute in elephants, and beseeches that your baron and army will cease to ravage his kingdom." The khan, having heard this message, took pity upon him, and ordered his general to withdraw, and conquer another country; and he has ever since received this tribute of the largest and most beautiful elephants.† In this kingdom, no handsome girl can be married till the king sees her, when, if pleased, he takes her to wife; otherwise, he gives her money, with which she can be married to a nobleman. In 1285, when I, Marco Polo, was there, the king had 326 sons and daughters, of whom 150 were men that

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* Ziamba, *Ramusio.* This is evidently Tsiompa, called also Ciampa, a maritime country between Cochin-china and Camboia, and which, projecting beyond the former, terminates the deep gulf of which itself, Tonquin, and Southern China, are the boundaries.

† It is sufficiently evident, even from our author's narrative, which was doubtless that current at the court of Kublai, that the issue of this expedition was the reverse of triumphant, and that the emperor granted such lenient terms solely because he could not push his demands farther. It appears by Chinese history, that the war was still more disastrous than is here represented, their army being closely hemmed in, and with difficulty effecting its retreat.—Marsden, p. 588. In the Crusca MS. the tribute is said to have consisted of *twenty* elephants.

could carry arms. Besides elephants, the country abounds in lignum aloes, and the wood called ebony,* which is very black, used in making chess-boards and writing-desks. I now proceed to a great island named Java.

VI.—The Island of Java.

Departing from Cianba, and going south and south-east 1500 miles, you come to this island. Good mariners, who know it intimately, describe it as the largest in the world, with a circuit of more than 3000 miles. The people are subject to a powerful king, are idolaters, and pay no tribute to any other prince. The territory is very rich, yielding pepper, nutmegs, galanga, cubebs, cloves, and all the richest of spices. Many merchants from Zai-tun and Manji come and carry on a great and profitable traffic. Its treasure also is so immense, that it can scarcely be estimated.† On account of the long and difficult navigation, the great khan never could acquire dominion over it.

VII.—Kingdom of Lochac.

Leaving this island, and sailing between south and south-west 700 miles, you find two isles, a large and a

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* Elephants abound in all the countries between India and China, and Mr Marsden quotes the Flora Cochin-chinensis for the copious supply of ebony, and its adaptation to ornamental furniture.

† The dimensions here assigned are much greater than those of Java Proper; whence Zurla contends that Borneo is the island described; but Count Boni seems to state sufficient reasons against this opinion. I incline, however, decidedly to concur with a suggestion slightly made by Mr Marsden, that the great Java of our traveller included both these islands. It is impossible otherwise to make even an approach to the dimensions here stated, and the calling Sumatra *Little* Java would be preposterous. It is also very unlikely that he should have omitted all mention of Borneo, which lay so completely in his way. The pepper and other spices were evidently procured in Java Proper, including, indeed, several that are raised in the Moluccas and other islands to the eastward; but Java has always been the chief mart, where the Chinese apparently found them assorted for sale. The great abundance of gold (meant by treasure) could only be found in Borneo.

small, called Sondur and Condur.* Departing thence, and going south-east still 500 miles, you find a very extensive province named Lochac.† The people are subject only to a native king, are idolaters, with languages of their own. They are tributary to no power, being so situated that no invader can reach their land; otherwise

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* These appear evidently to be Pulo Condore, a small group off the coast of Camboia, and a common rendezvous of vessels navigating these seas. But there is an extraordinary error in the direction S. S. W., which, instead of bringing a ship from Java hither, would carry it into the heart of the Southern Ocean. It is found alike in the earliest editions and in Ramusio. The Basle gives no direction; and Muller, intimating no difference, seems to imply the same in the Berlin MS. of Pipino; but I suspect the learned editor has neglected the collation, as the Museum MS. and the printed edition agree in making it south-west. I have no doubt Mr Marsden points out the real cause. Java was not in the line of the voyage, but described, as indeed is pretty distinctly intimated, from the report of mariners at Tsiompa. Having given the description, he returns to that country and reports the trip thence to Pulo Condore, which is exactly in the direction of south-west. In Pipino, both MS. and printed, the expression is: "*Dimissa* insula Java;" which can quite bear the sense, "Ceasing to treat of;" and probably a term of this import was in the original, which the other copyists and translators have misunderstood, and made it to imply departure from, &c.

† The distance in Ramusio is fifty miles; and Mr Marsden concludes that it must be Camboia, the capital of which is by an early writer called Loech. But all the best editions,—the French, Paris Latin, Crusca, Pucci, and Pipino, make the distance 500 miles, so that the country reached must be the eastern coast of what is now termed Malacca. There is, however, the great error of making the direction south-*east* instead of south-*west;* and this is common to the early editions and to Ramusio. It is probably a mistake in copying bad manuscript. Sceloc and Garbin sound very unlike; yet the number of letters is the same; a bad G might be mistaken for S, and *b* for *l*. Gryneus, who gives no direction in the preceding route, states here the right one, south-west. It is the same in the French edition of 1556. The learned editor of the Novus Orbis might, from other information, perceive this mistake. Pipino, too, having made the route to the two islands south-west, intimates here its continuance (*ultra* quas ad quingenta milliaria est Lorach). This correctness of the middle editions, while both the early and late ones are erroneous, appears curious. Pipino translated at a time when he might have access to excellent MSS.; and being a learned man, might interpret them better than the other copyists or translators.

it would soon be subdued by the great khan. Brazil-wood is in abundance, and gold in almost incredible quantities. There are elephants and other animals for hunting; and from this place is derived all the porcelain that is circulated as money through the provinces now described. I have only to add, that the country is difficult to reach; the king himself does not wish to be visited by strangers, and thus no one knows his treasure and condition.*

VIII.—Pentam and other Islands.

When a man goes 500 miles southward from Lochac, he finds an island named Pentam, very wild, all covered with odoriferous woods. Thence he navigates between these two islands about sixty miles, drawing only four paces of water, so that large vessels in the passage must remove their rudder. He then goes on south-east about thirty miles, and reaches an island also named Pentam, with the noble and rich city Malauir, having much traffic in spices and other articles. The people have a king and languages of their own.†

* This country, as above observed, must have been the eastern coast of Malacca, which the Malays had only recently reached, and not yet given their name. It is difficult to find one resembling Lochac, unless it be in Ligor, the seat formerly of a great trade; *ch* and *g* being always interchanged. The coast is still little known or frequented, and from the same causes, being out of the common route of navigation, and the people very rude. Gold dust is mentioned as an export from all its havens. Elephants' teeth are also noticed, and timber is plentiful (Milburn's Oriental Commerce, vol. ii. p. 320-341). The only mistake appears to be about the shells used for money (cowries), which are found on the adjacent coast of Borneo; but perhaps a quantity of imported ones had been here seen. The words "for money" are wanting in the French,—probably an omission, as the Crusca has them. Ramusio mentions "a fruit called berchi, in size resembling a lemon, and of delicious flavour." This is wanting in the early editions, and Mr Marsden cannot find any confirmation of it; generally, however, the fruits of the country are said to be good.

† The navigation in this chapter is intricate; yet I think it may be traced. The first 500 miles is evidently along the coast of Malacca, terminating at the island of Bintang. The next 60 must then have been through the Straits of Sincapore, which

IX.—Island of Little Java (Sumatra).

Departing from Pentam, and going 130 miles south-east, you find the island of Java the Lesser; but notwithstanding this title, it is above two thousand miles in circuit, with eight kingdoms, and the same number of crowned sovereigns.* I will tell you the whole truth about it. The people are idolaters, and each nation has a language of its own. There is a very great abundance of treasure and costly spices, as well as of lignum aloes and many other woods unknown in our country. What

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Mr Horsburgh (vol. ii. p. 177-182) describes as difficult, and in many parts very shallow. He might then come to the island of Pantjoor, adjacent to Sumatra, and which he also names Pentam. Possibly, however, it might be Batang, and the 30 miles be along its south-western coast. We have seen our author's fondness for identifying names that are at all similar. Ramusio's text is here very defective and confused, rendering it impossible for Mr Marsden to form any idea of the course. He makes the 60 miles south-east, and the 30 without direction; and he has nothing to show that there are two Pentams.

* The name of Lesser Java is evidently given, though it is admitted with no strict propriety, to the large island of Sumatra. Its extent, its products, its people, are described with very great correctness. The local details are more difficult to trace, as the author has given neither distances nor directions, names are much altered, and its turbulent little kingdoms are liable to such constant revolutions, that the most powerful in one age ceases to exist in another. Yet I cannot but wonder that Mr Marsden (p. 600) should pass a general censure against our traveller's description, and prefer to it the meagre one of Barbosa. I am convinced, however, that the learned editor has misconceived the whole scope of this voyage, which he supposes to have been through the Straits of Malacca, and along the northern coast of the island. It appears to me, on the contrary, that they went through the Straits of Sunda, and then along the western side. This was, no doubt, a circuitous route; yet many motives might bias them. It appears from Mr Horsburgh (vol. ii. p. 139) that the Malacca channel is dangerous to those unacquainted with it, as the Chinese were. Knowing the island evidently by way of Java, they might prefer the route familiar to them. We find them setting out with a course of 130 miles in the best editions, and 100 in others, to the *south-east;* a strange aberration from a track lying due north-west through the Malacca channel. One or two errors of direction have been lately observed; but these are rare, and the versions in that case differ; but here they all agree. Other and perhaps more decided proofs will be developed in examining the details.

will appear very wonderful is, that this isle lies so far south, that the north star is never seen. Now I will tell you of each kingdom by itself.

X.—Kingdom of Ferlech.

In that of Ferlech are Saracen merchants, who come with their vessels, and have converted the people to the law of Mohammed ; but only in the city, for those in the mountains live like brutes, eating the flesh of men and of the vilest animals. They worship various objects, particularly the first thing they meet after rising in the morning.*

XI.—Kingdom of Basman.

Leaving Ferlech, you enter Basman,† a kingdom by itself, whose people have a language of their own, and live without law, like beasts. They own the supremacy of the khan, but pay him no tribute, because the great distance prevents his troops from reaching them ; yet they sometimes make him a present of strange objects. Here are wild elephants, and unicorns not much smaller, being double the size of a buffalo. They have a large

* Mr Marsden, observing that the Arabs convert the Malay *p* into *f*, considers this place as Perlak, at the north-eastern point of the island. Yet Tanjong Perlak is merely Diamond Point, nor is there any record of a kingdom or even city bearing the name. Our views would place it about the middle of the eastern coast, particularly in the kingdom of Siak, and the name is not very unlike, though certainly with no striking resemblance. The cannibals are the Battas, inhabiting the interior of the country, and who have always borne that reputation. The Saracen religion was about this time established in Malacca, and was therefore very likely to have partially made its way into Sumatra.—Marsden's History, pp. 261, 262.

† Mr Marsden finds this kingdom in Pasé, formerly called Paçem, a short distance west of Diamond Point. Count Boni, urging that the sovereignties could not well be so crowded together, supposes Pasaman to be on the western coast. Our views would point to Pasaumah, in the interior from Palembang, near indeed to the western coast, yet communicating by a large river with the eastern, to which its power, formerly greater, may at this time have extended. On the whole, there is certainly nothing decisive in these two stations ; but perhaps the next may be otherwise.

black horn in the middle of the forehead, and beneath the tongue sharp prickles, which can inflict severe wounds. Their heads resemble that of the wild boar, yet they carry them bent to the earth. They are very ugly, and fond of wallowing among mire.* It is not true, as asserted among us, that they allow themselves to be taken by a virgin, but quite the contrary. There are here good and serviceable falcons, black like crows; also a prodigious number of monkeys of various forms and habits. But you must know that those who bring the little men from India practise a great deception. I assure you the figures to which they give that name are manufactured in this island in the following manner:—There is a species of small monkey, with a face resembling the human, which they catch, skin, and shave off all the hair except on the beard and chin; having then moulded them into a human semblance, they dry and preserve them with camphor and other articles. But it is a gross deception; for neither in India, nor in any other country, however savage, are there men so small as these pretended ones.† Now let us tell of a kingdom called Samara.

XII.—Kingdom of Samara.

When a man departs from Basman, he finds the kingdom of Samara, in which I myself, Marco Polo,

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* The rhinoceros, an animal then probably unknown in Europe, is here described with considerable accuracy. We may observe, that the southern part of the east coast, where we suppose our traveller now to be, is described on Mr Marsden's map as fenny, and subject to inundation; the situation best fitted for this animal, which would be out of place amid the mountainous tracts in the north.

† We have here a curious mention of a fraud practised on our ignorant ancestors. The belief of a nation of pigmies in the east was prevalent in that age, and is countenanced in the travels of Oderic and Mandeville. The former describes them on report; the latter avers that he saw them. The merchants, it appears, took advantage of this delusion, by preparing and selling, probably at high prices, specimens of this pretended variety of mankind. Our traveller's good sense and accurate observation enabled him to expose the trick.

remained five months, because the bad weather did not allow us to sail. Here neither the north star nor the constellation of the Greater Bear appeared. The people are savage idolaters, governed by a rich and powerful king, and owning a nominal submission to the great khan. During our stay, we landed and erected castles of wood and twigs, where we remained through the fear of these wicked men, who eat their fellow-creatures.* The best fishes in the world are found here. The people have no wheat, living on rice; and they make no wine. You must know there is a kind of tree, of which they cut a branch, and place a pot beneath, when, during the night, the vessel is filled, and very good wine is thus produced, both red and white. The tree resembles a

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* Mr Marsden considers this place as Sama-langa, a port on the northern coast, and Count Boni appears to acquiesce. I am convinced, on the contrary, that it is the Bay of Samangka (Samanca, *Horsburgh*), at the southern extremity; and this position, it is apprehended, forms a main key of the voyage. It is mentioned that not only the north star, but those of the Wain or Greater Bear had become invisible. This last could not be strictly true, but of course they were seen more partially the farther south he went. At all events, the disappearance of these northern stars is noticed more emphatically, and as taking place to a greater extent, than in the middle part of the island, opposite the Straits of Sincapore. Does not this imply that he was now on the southern coast, in about 5° S. lat. not on its opposite one, above 10° northward? Again, in turning the western point of this bay, he would come upon the ocean, and encounter in all its force the north-west monsoon, which, from October to April, blows with great violence, accompanied with thunder and lightning (Horsburgh, p. 47). If they arrived at the beginning of this period, the detention is easily accounted for. But this monsoon blows chiefly south of the equator; indeed, both Mr Horsburgh (Introd. p. 4), and Mr Wright (Nautical Directory, p. 17), consider its range as not extending beyond 12° S. and 4° N. lat. It could not therefore reach the northern coast of this great island, though stated to blow with peculiar force on the western. Mr Marsden (History of Sumatra, p. 297) describes the shores of this bay as occupied by a ferocious people named Orangabung who had been the terror of all their neighbours till lately, when their villages were destroyed. The Crusca gives the name Samarcha, which comes still nearer to Samara. There is thus a concurrence of circumstances showing this to have been the port described, and, consequently, the expedition to have passed through the Straits of Sunda.

small date-palm, with four branches, and when it ceases to give out more wine, they water its root, which causes it to produce again.* They have great quantities of very large Indian nuts, and eat all kinds of flesh, good and bad. Now let us tell you of a kingdom which is named Dagroian.

XIII.—Kingdom of Dagroian.

This kingdom has a language of its own; the people are very savage, subject to a king, but owning the supremacy of the great khan.† They are savage idolaters, and have the following very bad custom:—When a man falls sick, his relations send for the magicians, and inquire if he will recover, as these deceivers profess to know, by their enchantments and idols, whether he will live or die. In the latter case, the friends send for persons who place something over his mouth, by which he is suffocated. They then cook the body, and all the kinsmen come and eat his flesh, taking care not to leave the smallest portion; which they believe would breed worms, and thus seriously afflict the soul of the deceased. They next collect the bones, and place them in a large and beautiful chest, which they carry to caverns in the mountains, beyond the reach of wild beasts or any other injury. When they take any man belonging to another country, who cannot redeem himself, they kill and eat him in like manner. This is a very bad practice.‡ I must now, however, tell you something of Lambri.

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* Mr Marsden (History, p. 88) mentions palm-trees, of several species, from which the natives, in the manner described, extract the liquor called toddy, which in a few hours ferments and becomes intoxicating. The cocoa-nut, mentioned in the following sentence, is equally plentiful.

† Dragoyan, *Ramusio*.—Mr Marsden supposes this to be Indragiri, on the eastern coast. On the contrary, we look to the western, where the name most similar appears to be Ayer Aje (Ayer Rajah or Indrapour, *Milburn*), in about 2° S. lat., and near the highest mountains of the island.

‡ Mr Marsden has been able to find no confirmation of this peculiarly barbarous custom. The Battas, however, a numerous

XIV.—Kingdom of Lambri.

Lambri is a kingdom having a sovereign of its own, who owns the supremacy of the khan. The people are all idolaters; they have a great abundance of camphor and other spices; likewise brazil-wood.* This they sow, and when it has grown to a little twig, they transplant it to another place, and at the end of three years root it up.† We brought some of this seed to Venice, but it did not spring at all on account of the cold. I will tell you another very wonderful thing; for there are men in this kingdom who have tails like dogs, larger

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people in the interior, are believed to eat the flesh, not only of their enemies, but of condemned criminals. It appears also (Marsden's Sumatra, p. 388), that at the death of relations, a great feast is held, and numerous animals killed, the blood of which is partially sprinkled over the coffin. A groundwork is thus afforded, which a credulous fancy might work up into the story here narrated.

* Mr Marsden proceeds on the supposition of this being Jambi, on the eastern coast, yet repeatedly admitting that it has no correspondence except the imperfect one of name. He himself alludes to what we must agree with Count Boni in considering the real site. De Barros, the early historian of the Portuguese conquests, gives a list of kingdoms in their order: Daya, Lambri, Achem, and others. The first and last of these being at the north-west extremity of the island, Lambri must be in the same quarter. It might seem, indeed, to be between them; but the historian concludes thus: "Barros, Quinchel, and Mancopa, which falls upon Lambri, which is near to Daya, the first that we named." This distinctly implies that Lambri was more distant than Acheen, and hence farther south than Daya. Accordingly, in about 4° N. lat. Delisle's map has, in conspicuous characters, Labou. Mr Marsden has here Nalabu, which he describes (History, p. 185-188) as the seat of a considerable trade. Mr J. Arrowsmith has it Analaboo; still evidently the same with the Labou of Delisle, and, as I apprehend, the Lambri of De Barros and our traveller. Now his fleet was here, since, in the chapter after next, it is mentioned as thence finally setting sail. This is surely a strong confirmation of the voyage being along the western coast; for had their tedious detention been on the northern, it was little likely they should then sail 100 miles southward, without any object, and merely to return.

† Ramusio represents this process as taking place with another vegetable resembling the brazil-wood, which Mr Marsden conjectures to be indigo. Our text, taken from the early editions, makes the plantation to be of the brazil itself. Indigo is afterwards described under its own name.

than a palm, and who are covered with hair. They remain in the mountains, never visiting the towns.* There are unicorns, with various beasts and birds for hunting. Now let us depart and tell you of Fansur.

XV.—Kingdom of Fansur.

The people of Fansur are idolaters, have a king, and nominally acknowledge the great khan. Here grows the best *canfara fansuri,* which is much more valued than any other; indeed it sells for its weight in gold.† Wine is drawn from trees, in the manner described above: another wonder is, that, in this province, meal is obtained from them. These are large, the bark thin, and the interior all full of meal. The inhabitants take

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* It is rather mortifying, after Marco had repelled one fable of this description, that he should have given heed to another so similar. Mr Marsden mentions reports he had heard of savage men covered with long hair, and shunning all communication with the other inhabitants. I cannot help thinking it very probable, that the orang-outang or pongo of Borneo may lurk in some wild mountainous recesses of this adjacent island. Count Boni mentions, that Carletti, whose travels he had seen in MS., states his having heard a story exactly similar to this from his Chinese pilots.

† Facfur, *Pipino.* Fanfur, *Ramusio.* Mr Marsden supposes this to be Kampar, on the eastern coast, in which the Italian editor seems to acquiesce. I cannot but think the real site perfectly evident, though in a very different quarter; for it *must* be the district which yields that very fine camphor, for which the island is celebrated, bearing twenty times the price of that of Japan. This is completely ascertained to be in the interior from Barus or Baroos, on the western coast, whence it is called over the east *Camphor-Barus* (Crawfurd's Indian Archipelago, vol. i. p. 517). The very similar expression in the text seems to show that the two places, though with names somewhat dissimilar, are in fact the same. Count Boni quotes from Abulfeda the notice of Fansur as distinguished for this article, named *Fansurensis.* According to Captain Low, it is found 250 miles N. from Ayer Bongey, on the western coast only, being scarcely ever seen on the opposite side of the mountains (Journal Royal Asiatic Society, vol. ii. p. 45). It will be observed that the fleet had sailed on to Lambri, whence in the next chapter we shall see it departing. It was therefore by a detached excursion, or by diligent inquiry, that Marco gained his information respecting this important seat of commerce.

it out, and make a very good paste, of which we often ate.* Having told you of the kingdoms in this part of the isle, I will say nothing of the two others, because we did not visit them. I will now, therefore, go to another small island called Gavenispola.†

XVI.—Islands of Necuveran and Angaman (Nicobar and Andaman).

Departing from Java and the kingdom of Lambri, and travelling northward about 150 miles, you find two islands, one of which is called Necuveran.‡ The people have no king, and live like brutes, both men and women going quite naked. They are idolaters, and have forests of noble and valuable trees; among which are sandal-wood, the Indian nut, clove, brazil, and many others.

Angaman is a very large island, without a king; the people idolaters, resembling savage beasts; indeed they are a most extraordinary race, having a head, teeth, and jaws like those of a mastiff dog. They are very cruel, and eat all the men of every other nation whom they

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* This is manifestly the sago, a food now well known and valued in Europe. Ramusio has a passage stating that the wood is as hard as iron, and sinks when thrown into water; that it is capable of being split evenly from one end to the other, like the bamboo; that the natives make it into lances, which, when hardened in the fire, are superior to those of iron. This Mr Marsden observes to be quite an erroneous statement, as applied to the sago, being applicable only to a palm of a quite different species. There is not the least trace in the early editions of such a paragraph, which has evidently been interpolated by some inaccurate observer.

† In the Crusca, *Nenispola.* It is curious that this island is never again mentioned, and occurs only in it and the French edition. Count Boni suggests that it may be Puloway.

‡ In Ramusio, it is added :—" The other Angaman." This is evidently interpolated by some one who was ignorant of the latter being too distant to admit of its being the island meant, which is evidently another of the Nicobar group plainly designated under the name of Necuveran. The rude yet harmless character of the people, and the noble trees with which the soil is clothed, are fully confirmed by good subsequent authorities.

can seize.* They have great abundance and variety of spices, with fruits different from ours, but live chiefly on flesh and milk. Having told of these various people, I will now mention another island.

XVII.—Island of Seilan.

When you depart from Angaman, and sail about a thousand miles westward, a little to the south, you reach the island of Seilan,† the very best of its size in the world. It is 2400 miles in circuit; yet I must tell you that anciently it was larger, being 3600, as appears by the old maps of the mariners on that sea; but the north wind blows with such violence, that a great part has been carried away by the water.‡ The people have a king called Sendemain, and are tributary to none; they are idolaters, and go quite naked, except a small covering round the middle. They have no grain but rice, living on it and on flesh. I will now describe the most precious thing in the world; for here are noble and beautiful rubies, which can be procured nowhere else; also the sapphire, the topaz, the amethyst, and various other precious stones. The king has the most beautiful ruby that ever was or can be in the whole world. It is the most splendid object on earth, and seems to glow like fire; it is of such value as money

* The group of the Andamans is here manifestly pointed out. All accounts agree as to the ferocious and intractable disposition of the inhabitants; Mr Colebrook considers them as perhaps the least civilized race in the world. It is even strongly reported, though seemingly not proved, that they are guilty of cannibalism. The resemblance to the canine race is too strongly stated; yet they belong to that of the Papuas or oriental negroes, whose generally deformed visage, with a projection in the lower part of the face, gives a considerable similarity to the animal mentioned.

† This is evidently the well-known island of Ceylon, and both the distance and direction are here extremely correct.

‡ The maps of Ptolemy, to which the Arab navigators were accustomed to pay great regard, represent the island of Taprobane under very exaggerated dimensions. Finding these erroneous, yet not willing to believe him mistaken, they probably reconciled the difference by the unfounded theory stated in the text.

could scarcely purchase.* The great khan sent his messengers to him, wishing to buy it, and offering the value of a city. The monarch replied, that he had received it from his ancestors, and would for no earthly consideration part with it. The people are not men-at-arms, but unwarlike and cowardly; when they need soldiers in war, they send for those of another country, commonly for Saracens.

XVIII.—Origin of the Boodhist Religion in Seilan.†

I have also to tell you that in this island there is a great mountain, of which the rocks are so broken that it can be ascended only by chains of iron suspended, whereby men may mount to the summit. Here, according to the Saracens, is the monument of Adam our first father;‡ but the idolaters consider it as that of Sergamon Borcam. They describe this last as the first man whose image they worshipped, and as the best that ever lived in their country. He was son to a great, rich, and powerful king, yet refused to succeed to the throne, or to attend to any worldly concern. The monarch, who had no other son, was both grieved and angry. He made him large promises, offering even to resign, and raise him immediately to the throne; but the youth would listen to no such proposal. The father was like to

* Ceylon is described as peculiarly distinguished for the number and variety of its precious stones, but not, as our traveller represents, for their excellence. Rubies are particularly mentioned in the foremost place, and though they are usually small (Milburn, vol. ii. p. 360), there seems no improbability of some one very fine specimen having been found. Count Boni refers to a notice of the present one in Haithon's History of Armenia, ch. vi., a good and quite independent authority.

† This chapter, in the French, Crusca, and Ramusio, is introduced some time after, as giving particulars previously omitted. We have thought it more satisfactory, after the example of the Paris Latin, to introduce it here as its proper place.

‡ The principal mountain in the island, and one of great altitude, was really named Adam's Peak by the Arabs, before the arrival of Europeans. It is of very difficult ascent; and Mr Davy actually mentions the use of chains in reaching its summit.—Marsden, p. 671.

die of grief, but bethought himself of a plan for bringing him back to the world. He lodged him in a very fine palace, and appointed 30,000 beautiful damsels to serve and amuse him. The prince, however, remained insensible to their seductions, and led a more virtuous and chaste life than before. Now his habits had been so recluse that he had never seen a dead person, or one not perfectly sound in his members. One day, happening to ride across the path where a man lay dead, he was utterly astonished, and asked of his attendants what that was. This being explained, he inquired if all men died, and being told they did so, he walked on, musing very deeply. Some time after, he saw one unable to walk, and with all his teeth decayed through extreme old age. Having asked, and being informed what that was, he declared he would no longer remain in this evil region, but would seek a place where men neither died nor grew old. He left the palace, and journeyed into great and trackless mountains, where he spent his whole life virtuously and chastely, observing rigid abstinence; so that had he been a Christian, he must have been a very great saint. When he died, his corpse was carried to his father, who, on seeing the body of one whom he loved better than himself, was grieved to the heart. He made an image of him composed of gold and precious stones. All the people of the country adored him as a god, and they say that he died eighty-four times, becoming first an ox, then a horse, then a dog, and various other animals; but that the eighty-fourth time he became a god, and they worship him as their best and greatest. These were the first idolaters, from whom all the others in Seilan were descended. But I assure you, many from the most distant countries come hither on pilgrimage, as Christians to the shrine of St James, and the monument on this mountain is said to be that of the prince, whose teeth, hair, and skull were preserved. But the Saracens say that it is that of Adam, our first parent. God knows which is right, but one cannot believe the latter, for the Scriptures of our holy church assure us

that he died in another part of the world.* Now it happened that the great khan, hearing that the tomb of Adam, with the other objects mentioned, was on this mountain, sent, in 1284, a numerous embassy, who travelled by land to the island of Seilan. They went to the king, and procured two of the grinding teeth, which were very large, also the hair, and the cup, of beautiful green porphyry. They then returned, and sent notice to their sovereign of what they were bringing, when he ordered his subjects to go forth and meet these relics of our first father. All the citizens of Kambalu came out; the chief men received the sacred objects, and brought them to his majesty, who welcomed them with great joy and reverence. I assure you, too, they found this cup to be of such virtue, that when food was introduced for one man, there would be enough for five; and the great khan declared he had tried this, and found it the truth.† Now having told you truly all this history, I will leave it and relate other things.

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* Sergamon, in Ramusio Sogomon, is a corruption of Sakya-muni, a common appellation of Boodha, known as the chief object of veneration in Ceylon, as well as Burmah. Mr Marsden (p. 672), refers to an "Account of the Incarnation of Buddha," translated from the Burman by Mr Carey. In accordance with our author, he is described as a young prince flying into the wilderness, and in vain tempted by his father with every species of splendour, and particularly with female attractions, to return into the world. It is amusing to observe how Marco, following the ideas of his age, is struck with admiration at the senseless ascetic life led by this object of Indian idolatry. The doctrine of transmigration here alluded to, also characterizes that creed. The French edition in this part followed is more copious than that of Ramusio; and such is frequently the case with the remainder of the narrative; whereas the latter had hitherto contained usually all the passages found in any other edition, with others peculiar to itself.

† If, however, the modern inhabitants may be believed, the khan did not monopolize these precious relics. They still preserve in the great temple at Candy a tooth of that sacred personage, in honour of which a splendid festival and procession are annually held.—Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. iii. p. 161.

XIX.—Kingdoms of Maabar.

When you depart from Seilan, and go westward about sixty miles,* you come to the extensive province of Maabar, on the mainland. It is called India the Greater, and is indeed the noblest and richest country in the whole world.† In this province there are five kings, who are brothers, and the one that reigns here is called Sender-bandi Davar. The largest and finest of pearls are found in a gulf between this continent and the island, having nowhere more than ten or twelve paces depth of water, and in some places only two. Vessels, large and small, resort thither from the beginning of April to the middle of May, and cast anchor in a place called Bettalar, about sixty miles out at sea; they then go in boats and begin the fishery. Many merchants, formed into companies, hire and pay the men employed. They gave a tenth to the king, and a twentieth to the Abraiamain, who enchants the fishes, depriving them of the power to injure the persons who dive under water for the pearls; indeed he can enchant also all kinds of beasts and birds. The charm, however, lasts only during the day; at night the

* This is exactly the distance from Aripo, the most north-easterly part of Ceylon, to the nearest part of the continent; but Mr Marsden, in making this remark, refuses to claim any credit on that ground for the author, on account of his alleged general want of precision on these points; but we have endeavoured to show that most of his supposed mistakes have been in fact those of his learned editor himself, or of the corrupt texts to which he had access. He imagines the port sailed from to be Columbo; but gives no reason, nor can we discover any, for a locality which would convert Marco's very accurate statement into one much the reverse.

† Maabar must not be confounded with Malabar, though it has been so, and the latter term, in Ramusio's text, is erroneously substituted. Signifying "the passage," it appears to apply to that chain of sand-banks and coral-reefs named Adam's Bridge by the Arabs, and Rama's Bridge by the Hindoos. Mr Marsden has quoted several writers, both Arab and Indian, applying the term Mabar, or Maber, to this district, which appears to include Tanjore and the Carnatic. The term India, as we may observe more fully afterwards, was applied in that age generally to the southern countries of Asia, among which Hindostan is justly distinguished as the greatest and finest.

animals enjoy full liberty. When the men in the boats have found water four to twelve feet deep, they plunge to the bottom, and get shells called sea-oysters, and within whose flesh are found pearls of all sizes and shapes. These are brought up in very large quantities, and distributed over the world,—the king drawing from them a great revenue.* During the rest of the year they are not found here; but at a place 300 miles distant, where they are taken from September to the middle of October.

XX.—Hindoo Customs and Superstitions.

Now, in all this province of Maabar, there is not a tailor, for the people go naked at every season. The air is always so temperate, that they wear only a piece of cloth round the middle. The king is dressed just like the others, except that his cloth is finer,† and he wears a necklace full set with rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and other precious stones, worth a great treasure. He has also suspended from his neck a silken cord, reaching a pace down, and containing 104 of the largest pearls and most valuable rubies. It is worn because he repeats every day, morning and evening, 104 prayers in honour of his idols. To this he is bound by his faith and religion, by the example and injunction of his ancestors.‡ He wears also round three parts both

* This account of the place, the period, and the mode of taking the pearls, is accordant with the best modern observations. The king still claims the same right, but prefers to make it available by farming the privilege to the merchants engaged. The operatives, however, are paid by shares of the produce. Among these the enchanters are considered as indispensable as ever, to secure the divers against the sharks, who are the ravenous fishes here alluded to.—Marsden, p. 627-630.

† Mr Marsden quotes Sonnerat and Barthema in confirmation of this statement. We may add, that Dubois (Manners and Customs of India, 4to, pp. 204, 205) represents this as still the genuine Hindoo dress, though those connected with the Mohammedan courts have adopted from them in addition the turban and the muslin robe enveloping the person.

‡ The use of such chaplets or rosaries, to accompany prayers, is common among the votaries of the Bramin and Boodhist religions, as well as of the Catholic. According to Mr Mars-

of his arms and legs, bracelets of gold, full of goodly stones and pearls. In short, the number of his jewels is surprising, being of more value than a handsome city, and no wonder, since they are all produced in his own dominions. No man is allowed to export either a pearl or stone of great value, but must produce it to him, and as he gives double its cost, they do so very willingly, whence he has collected so ample a store. Now I must tell you of other marvellous things: he has 500 wives; and as soon as he sees a beautiful lady, takes and keeps her for himself.* He did the same in the case of a very handsome wife of his brother, who, being a prudent man, submitted, and did not quarrel on that account.† The king has certain faithful adherents, who attend him on horseback wherever he goes, and hold great commands under him; nay, what is wonderful, they serve him both in this and in the other world. Whenever he dies, and his body is thrown into a great fire, these vassals throw themselves after him, that they may accompany and serve him still in the future state.‡ It is the national custom that, when the king dies, and leaves a great treasure, his son will not spend it for the world; saying, I have all my father's kingdom and people, why should I not support myself as he did. Thus the treasure collected in this kingdom becomes immense.§

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den's best information, the number of beads is 108,—a small discrepancy. In Ramusio (only), it is added that the daily prayer consists in the repetition of the word *pacauca*.

* Ramusio says, "at least a thousand;" but the present number only is stated in the French, Crusca, and other early versions, and is surely amply sufficient.

† In Ramusio, this forbearance is ascribed to the interposition of their mother; which, in the early versions, is introduced elsewhere, and in more general terms.

‡ The examples of the servants of Indian princes burning themselves along with their masters, are stated by Mr Marsden to be numerous; and he quotes from Barbosa and the early Arabians instances of its being done by a previous voluntary engagement.

§ The accumulation of treasure, so rare in Europe, is a general policy of oriental princes.

In this country no horses are reared, and hence the greater part of the revenue is employed in obtaining them from foreign regions. The merchants of Curmos, of Quisci, of Dufar, of Soer, and of Aden, whose provinces contain many steeds of fine quality, purchase, embark, and bring them to the king and his four princely brothers, selling them for 500 sagi of gold, worth more than 100 marcs of silver. I assure you, this monarch buys annually more than 2000, but, by the end of the year, they are all dead, from wanting the medicine necessary to keep them in health. The merchants who import them wish this to happen, and are therefore careful not to introduce the cure.* Another custom is, that when a man has committed a crime, and is condemned to die, he expresses a wish to devote himself in honour of a certain divinity, to which the king consents. Then his relations and friends place him on a wagon, giving him twelve knives, and lead him through the city, calling out, "This brave man is about to kill himself for the love of the great idol." When they come to the place of execution, he takes a knife and cries aloud, "I kill myself for the love of such a deity." He then, with different knives, strikes himself in one arm, then in the other, next in the stomach, and so on till he expires, when the relations burn his body with great joy.† I must tell you another custom of this

* Mr Marsden finds undoubted testimonies, from Abulfeda to Dr Buchanan, that no horses are bred in the southern part of the peninsula; but all those used are imported. Count Boni (p. 172) has found in Tavernier and the Lettres Edifiantes, that frequent *medicine* and peculiar care are requisite to keep them in health.

† The prevalence in India of the dark practice of religious suicide is well known. There is no other authority for confining it to criminals, or even considering it customary in their case. The traveller may have witnessed an instance of the kind, and applied it too generally. Mr Ward, however, observes that the practice prevails chiefly among those exposed to incurable diseases, distress, or contempt. He reckons the number who thus perish in Bengal at 500. The cutting with sharp instruments is mentioned by modern writers, not as a mode of producing death, but as an exhibition made by superstitious mendicants.

country, that when a man is dead, and his body burned, his wife throws herself into the fire with her lord; she is then much praised by the people, and many ladies follow the example.* The men also of this kingdom adore idols, and many worship the ox, saying, he is a valuable animal, and on no account would they kill him, or eat his flesh. Yet there is a race named gaui who eat it, but as they dare not slay the animal, they use only those that die a natural or accidental death. All the people, too, anoint their houses with its dung.† It is the custom also that the king, barons, and other persons sit upon the ground, and when asked why they decline a more honourable seat, they say, "We came from earth, and must return to it, and cannot too much honour this common mother." These gaui who eat beef are the persons by whose ancestors St Thomas the apostle was killed; hence none of this lineage can enter the place where he lies buried, nor could twenty men force them in, nor ten hold them there, on account of the virtue of that sacred body.‡

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* The reader is probably familiar with the *Suttee*, or custom of Hindoo widows burning themselves on the funeral-pile of their husbands, now happily abolished by the British government. In Ramusio, it is represented as peculiar to the widows of the criminal suicide; but the early versions more correctly report it as a general practice.

† The degrading homage paid to this animal, as also the filthy manner in which it is expressed, are well known; and Mr Marsden has accumulated abundant evidence on the subject. Dubois (p. 121) mentions that it is death to kill a cow, and expresses his astonishment that the natives should not rise in insurrection at the view of Europeans slaughtering and devouring in such numbers these adored divinities. That they merely deplore it in silence is considered a striking evidence of their tame and passive disposition.

‡ These gaui are evidently the outcast and despised race named Pariahs, who, being excluded from all intercourse with the higher castes, observe none of those restrictions as to food in which the latter take pride. They are supposed to form a fifth of the population of Southern India. See Account of British India (Edinburgh Cabinet Library), vol. ii. pp. 333, 334. The odious character attached to them probably suggested to the Christians of the country the legend respecting

In this country there grows no grain but rice. It is remarkable that large fine horses in process of breeding produce only ponies with twisted legs, unfit for riding, and good for nothing. The people go to battle with lance and shield, entirely naked; yet are they not valiant and courageous, but mean and cowardly. They kill no animals of any description; but when they wish to eat their flesh, make them be slain by the Saracens and other nations, whose laws and customs are different. Both men and women wash the whole body in water twice every day, morning and evening, and till then will neither eat nor drink. He who omits this observance is regarded as we do a heretic.*

Very severe justice is executed upon those who commit murder or any other trespass. When a creditor has repeatedly applied for payment and been deceived by fallacious promises, he takes the following course. He draws a circle round the debtor, who dares not move beyond it, till he has either made payment or given good security; and should he attempt to escape, he becomes liable to capital punishment. Marco himself, when returning homeward through this country, was eyewitness to a remarkable transaction of this nature. The king owed a sum of money to a foreign merchant, and being frequently solicited, he put him off with empty promises. One day, when his majesty was riding out, the creditor took the opportunity of describing such a circle round his person. On seeing what had been done, the monarch immediately stopped, and did not move from the spot till the demand was satisfied. The people viewed with admiration this conduct, and pronounced their sovereign well entitled to the epithet of just.†

St Thomas, and the absurd statement here made, which our traveller too lightly believed.

* The practice of ablution, so well suited to the climate, is very general in India, and used as a religious observance. —Marsden, p. 642.

† This paragraph, with the exception of the first sentence, is

Most persons abstain from drinking wine, and reject the testimony or guarantee of those who indulge in it;* also of mariners, accounted a reckless and desperate race. Dissolute conduct is practised without censure. The heat is wonderful, and is the cause of their going naked. No rain falls except in June, July, and August, and were not the air cooled by showers during these three months, it would be impossible to live. Many are skilled in an art which they call physiognomy, which consists in knowing men or women, their qualities good or bad, by merely seeing them. They regard augury beyond any people in the world; for, I assure you, if a man sets out on a journey, and meets an omen deemed unlucky, he often turns back.† Whenever a boy or girl is born, the father or mother causes the nativity to be written out, the day, month, and hour, and these are interpreted by astrologers learned in enchantment and the magical art.

As soon as a son attains the age of thirteen, he is set at liberty, and no longer allowed to remain in his father's house. He receives from twenty to twenty-four groats of their money, and is then considered capable of earning his own subsistence by some trade. These boys, accordingly, run about in all directions throughout the day,

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exclusively in Ramusio. The drawing of the circle is an authentic Hindoo custom. Mr Marsden admits the king's conduct to bear an air of romance. We have formerly observed that the name of Marco is studiously introduced into these apocryphal passages.

* All accounts agree in the detestation with which drunkenness is regarded by the Brahminical orders. Ramusio *alone* uses the qualified expression, wine from grapes; which we can scarcely consider genuine in regard to a country where at that time it could scarcely be known.

† Ramusio here says: "In every day of the week there is one hour which they regard as unlucky, and this they name *choiach*: For instance, on Monday, the hour *mezzaterza*; on Tuesday, that of *terza*; on Wednesday, that of *nona*; and during these hours they make no purchases nor transact any business, believing it would be unfortunate. In the same manner, they ascertain by means of their books the qualities of every day throughout the year." This passage does not occur in the early editions, and Mr Marsden has been able to find only slight confirmation of it.

buying and selling. During the pearl-fishery, they frequent the beach and purchase from the fishermen five or six small ones, which they carry to the merchant, who, on account of the heat, has remained seated in his house. They tell him what they have paid, and demand a reasonable profit, which he usually gives. The day's business being over, they carry provision to their mothers, who prepare and dress it for their dinner; but they do not depend at all on their father for a maintenance.*

Here, and throughout all India, the birds and beasts are different from ours, except one bird, which is the quail. They have also bald owls, which fly in the night; they have neither wings nor feathers, and are as large as an eagle. The eagles are black like crows, larger than ours, expert both at flying and hawking. Another thing worth mentioning is, that they feed their horses with flesh and many other dishes cooked with rice. Their monasteries are filled with idols, to whom many young girls are devoted by their parents. They must go to the monastery whenever required by the superior, which is usually several times a-week. They there sing, dance, and make great rejoicings. These young ladies also prepare savoury dishes of flesh and other food, which they carry to the sanctuary, and place before the idol as much as would make a good meal for a great lord. They then dance, sing, and rejoice, till time has been given for him to feed on the substance of the meat, when they take and eat it themselves, with great rejoicing. These ladies, who are very numerous, continue the same mode of life till after their marriage.† Having

* This paragraph, with the exception of the first sentence, is only in Ramusio. Mr Marsden gives evidence, that Indian boys, at a very early period, are actively employed in earning a subsistence for themselves.

† These *Cunsheny*, or dancing-girls, are a well-known appendage to Hindoo temples. Dr Buchanan assures us, that there is none of any consequence in the south to which a number of them are not attached. He and other writers represent them as leading very irregular lives, which is not expressly stated here, yet seems implied in a subsequent passage.

given you this full account of the manners, customs, and doings of this kingdom, we shall depart and tell of another, named Mutfili.

XXI.—Masulipatam—Diamonds of Golconda.

At this kingdom we arrive after departing from Maabar and travelling northward about a thousand miles. It is subject to a queen of great wisdom, whose husband died forty years ago, and her love to him was such that she has never married another. During this whole term, she has ruled the nation with great equity, and been beloved beyond measure by her people.* They are idolaters and independent; they live on rice, flesh, and milk. In this kingdom, you must know, is found the diamond; there are several mountains, among which, during rain, water flows with great turbulence, and through wide caverns; and when the shower ceases, men search through the ground previously inundated, and find the gems. In summer, there is not a drop of water, and the heat can scarcely be endured, while fierce and venomous serpents inspire great fear; yet those who venture thither discover valuable diamonds. There is also an extensive and deep valley, so enclosed by rocks as to be quite inaccessible; but the people throw in pieces of flesh, to which the diamonds adhere. Now you must observe, there are a number of white eagles, which, when they see the flesh in the bottom of the valley, fly thither, seize and carry it to different spots. The men are on the watch, and as soon as they see the bird with the spoil in its mouth, raise loud cries, when, being terrified, it flies away and drops the meat, which they take up, and find the diamond attached. Even when the prey has been swallowed, they watch where the excrement is voided, and obtain in

* This place, called in Ramusio Murphili and Monsul, is Masulipatam, a flourishing town, the chief of the northern Circars. The distance and direction here given are correct. The queen is not mentioned in Ramusio; but is introduced on the authority of the two Paris and the Crusca editions.

this way not a few jewels. Now this is the only country in the world containing these precious stones; and do not suppose that the best come to our christian countries; they are carried to the great khan and other lords of those regions, whose ample treasure enables them to purchase.* I must mention, too, that here are made the most beautiful and valuable cotton cloths in the world; also the thinnest and most delicate, resembling our spiders' webs.† They have abundance of animals, and the largest sheep in the world, with plentiful subsistence of every kind. I must now describe the place containing the body of the apostle St Thomas.

XXII.—St Thomas (Madras), Legends respecting him.

This is in a small town of Maabar, containing few inhabitants, and seldom visited by merchants, there being little trade, and the roads difficult. Many Christians and Saracens, however, resort thither in pilgrimage: the latter esteem him a great saint, and even assert that he was a Mohammedan. But I will now relate a wonder. The Christians, who repair to that shrine, take from the place a red earth, carry it into their country, and give a small portion to any person sick of a fever, who is presently cured. But I have now a miracle to tell; for about the year 1288, a baron of this district had a great

* The diamond mines of Golconda, in the interior, are celebrated throughout the world. This and Pannah, another not very remote district of Hindostan, are the only quarters, previous to the discovery of Brazil, in which this most valued of the precious stones was found. The territory is rugged and rocky, though not in the degree here described; and it really is in the moistened soil, after the inundation caused by the periodical rains has subsided, that the diamonds are mostly found. The story of the eagles must be classed as fabulous; yet there is no reason to suppose it of our author's invention. It is found in the Arabian Nights, where it seems only adopted from the general belief of Asia. Count Boni met with it in a scientific treatise on Precious Stones, recently translated by Signor Rainieri from the Turkish of Ahmed Teifachite.

† Masulipatam is well known as the chief mart for the fine cotton cloths made on the coast of Coromandel.

quantity of rice, and filled with it all the houses around the church. The pilgrims having thus no place to lodge, prayed him much to desist; but being fierce and proud, he paid no regard to their entreaty. Next night, accordingly, Messer St Thomas appeared to him with a fork in his hand, which he thrust forcibly against his throat, causing severe pain, and saying, "If you do not forthwith empty my houses, you shall die an evil death." He disappeared, and the baron rose early in the morning, related the apparition, and caused all the buildings to be emptied. The Christians greatly rejoiced, and honoured this great apostle. I could relate other wonderful cures effected on persons labouring under various bodily infirmities; but I will now merely describe his death. He had left his hermitage in the wood, and was engaged in prayer, while around were a number of peacocks, which are more numerous here than elsewhere in the world. Now an idolatrous Gaui, aiming at one of these birds, let fly an arrow without seeing the saint, whom, however, it struck on the right side; and finding himself thus wounded, he very mildly adored his Creator, and soon after expired. But before coming hither, he had converted many people in Nubia,* as I will afterwards narrate.

When a child in this province is born, they anoint him every day with the oil of sesamé, which makes him

* There can be no doubt, that, from the earliest ages of Christianity, there resided here a body of Christians, who, with or without reason, believed that they were converted by St Thomas, and that he here suffered martyrdom. Meliapour, a few miles from Madras, always, with the earliest European travellers, bears his name; even the Arabs called it Beit-tuma or Temple of Thomas. Some learned writers maintain, that it was not the apostle, but a Syrian monk of the same name, who penetrated into this region; but the contrary is the general belief of the East. The events here narrated are stamped with the credulity of the age; yet in fact there is nothing in them actually supernatural. The death of the apostle, as related, might easily happen by mere accident; and in the case of the nobleman, there is merely a dream, which the representations of the Christians, though repelled at the moment, might easily excite in his mind

become blacker than at birth; for whoever is most deeply tinted is honoured in proportion. Indeed, these people paint their god and all their idols black, and their devils white as snow. The men, when they go to battle, place such faith in the ox as a holy thing, that they take the hair of the wild bull, and if they fight on a horse, attach it to the neck; if on foot, to their shield; thinking themselves thus better secured against every danger. Hence, the hair of this animal sells at a considerable price.*

XXIII.—Lar; the Bramins.

Lar is a province lying westward of this place, and thence came originally all the Abraiamain in the world. These are the best and most honest of all merchants, and would not on any account tell a lie.† They neither

* The inhabitants of this southern part of India are of a very dark colour, and they have the custom of frequently anointing their bodies with oil; but there is no reason to suppose the two circumstances connected in the manner here supposed. Many images of the Hindoo deities are formed of a species of black granite, and some of their *asuras* or demons are painted white; here, too, the motive assigned is probably fanciful. The hairs of the wild bull are doubtless those of the yak or Thibetian ox, which, under the name of chowry tails, are considered by Hindoo grandees one of the most valued ornaments. The superstitious importance attached to them is nowhere else mentioned; yet is not impossible. Probably, however, Marco had little opportunity of confidential intercourse with the natives; so that, while he correctly observed their actions, he had not equal means of penetrating into their motives.

† The origin of the Bramins, who are evidently the order here alluded to, has baffled the most learned inquirers; and it could not be expected that our traveller, in this cursory visit, should throw much light upon the subject. Yet it is curious that Ptolemy has placed in this quarter the Brachmani Magi; and Dr Buchanan mentions that the Bramins here consider themselves a separate and superior race to those of the north; looking down with contempt even on such as serve the sacred shrines of Benares.—Buchanan, vol. i. p. 308.

The position of Lar or Lac, to the west of Madras, carries us to Arcot and Conjeveram, the last noted for its splendid pagodas; and here, in fact, D'Anville, in his "Antiquité de l'Inde," places the Brachme of Ptolemy. The appearance of simplicity and austerity might easily impose on our author,

eat flesh nor drink wine, are faithful to their wives, and lead every way very virtuous lives. They take nothing from any one, and do nothing that could be considered a sin.* They are all known by a silk thread worn over the shoulder, and tied beneath the opposite arm, so that it passes across both the breast and back.† They have a rich king, who readily purchases precious stones, and enjoins that the merchants shall offer to him all the pearls brought from Maabar, for which he pays double the cost. They therefore procure them in large quantities. They are idolaters, and regard omens from birds and beasts more than any other nation in the world. I will tell you one of their customs: when one wishes to treat for any merchandise, he rises and observes his shadow in the sun; and if it be of the due length, on that day, according to certain rules, he makes his bargain; but if it be not long enough, he will not buy a single article. If they go to a house for this purpose, and see one of the animals named tarantula, which here greatly abound, they observe if it comes to them from a lucky quarter, in which case they buy; but if otherwise, they give up the

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who would have little opportunity of observing the frauds with which this order are charged. See Account of India (Edinburgh Cabinet Library), vol. ii. p. 329-331. The mention of them as merchants does not exactly accord with our ideas, and Count Boni suspects they may be confounded with Banians; but the latter are chiefly confined to the great cities on the western coast. Dubois informs us, that in this part of India many Bramins pursue that avocation; and we learn from Buchanan (as above) that there are two classes, Vaidika, devoted to spiritual services, and Lokika, who follow secular employments. The latter are regarded as decidedly inferior; yet they do not lose caste, and may intermarry with the others.

* Ramusio alone has an additional sentence: "When any foreign merchant, unacquainted with the customs of the country, introduces himself, and intrusts his adventure to one of them, he carefully attends to his interest, and renders him a faithful account, not even demanding any recompense, unless it is courteously proffered." This editor also differs in saying that they eat meat, and drink the wine of the country. Count Boni is so convinced, and with reason we think, of this being an error, that he has altered it in his reprint.

† The *zennar*, or sacred cord, is a well-known appendage of the Bramin.—Marsden, p. 666.

transaction and go away. Nay, I assure you, if one leaving his house hears a man sneeze in a manner that does not appear lucky, he stops and re-enters. Even if on his road he sees a swallow approaching from the right or left, in an unlucky manner, he returns.* Their teeth are very good, through the use of an herb, which makes them look extremely well, and is very salutary.† They never bleed from the vein or any other part, yet perfectly preserve their health.

There are among them an order named cuigui, who live to an extraordinary age, even 150 or 200 years, yet can perform all the service of the monastery and idols as well as younger men. This is owing to their great abstinence in eating and drinking; for they subsist mostly on rice and milk. They mingle also quicksilver and sulphur, making a beverage which they drink from their infancy, saying that it lengthens their lives.‡ There is also in this kingdom a religious order of more rigid cuigui, observing the strictest abstinence, leading a very rude and severe life, and going perfectly naked. They adore the ox, and many wear on their forehead a

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* We cannot better illustrate this passage than by the following extract from Professor Wilson's Hindoo drama, a work richly illustrative both of the poetry and manners of India. It is a speech which the native poet puts into the mouth of a peculiarly sage and philosophic character :—

> " Facing the sun, on yonder blighted tree,
> The bird of evil augury is perched.
> Ha ! on my path the black snake sleeping lies :
> Roused from his slumber, he unfolds in wrath
> His spiry length, and threatening beats the ground
> With bulk inflated, whilst his hooded neck
> Expands, and from between his venomed fangs
> Protrudes his hissing tongue. I slip, yet here
> No plashy mire betrays my heedless feet.—
> Still throbs my left eye, and my left arm trembles ;
> And still that bird in flight sinistral cries
> To warn me of impending ill."

† The chewing of the betel-leaf, a habit universal in India, is here evidently alluded to. Ramusio has it not in this place, but introduces it afterwards at much greater length.

‡ This sentence appears only in the French and Crusca, and I have not been able to find any authority for the practice.

small effigy of one in copper or bronze gilded. They also burn the dung, and reduce it to a powder, with which they reverentially anoint many parts of their body, as Christians use holy water. They eat neither from spoon nor platter, but from large leaves, mostly of the apple of paradise. Even these must be dry; for if green, they are said to have a soul, which it would be sin to kill; and they would rather die than commit towards any animal an action believed unlawful. When asked why they feel no shame in going naked, they say, because they wish to have nothing belonging to this world, which they entered without clothing; and committing no sin, they have no reason to be ashamed. Besides, they kill no living creature, neither fly nor flea, nor hog nor worm, considering they have souls. They will sleep on the earth without any covering, whence it is a great wonder they do not die, much more that they enjoy so long a life. They fast the whole year round, drinking only water.* Some reside in the monastery to serve the gods; but before admission they undergo the following trial. The young girls offered to the idols caress these new candidates, and endeavour variously to entertain them. Such as appear to take any pleasure in these endearments, are rejected as unworthy; but if they show themselves totally indifferent, they are then retained.† Such are the customs of these cruel and

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* The term in Ramusio is *tingui;* but that of *cuigui* in the early editions comes much nearer to that of *jogi*, or *yogi*, by which, as well as that of *sannyasi*, and sometimes *fakirs*, is designated a much-noted class of Hindoo ascetics. Their rigid abstinence, rejection of clothes, and scrupulous tenderness as to animal life, have been observed from the earliest ages. The leaf here noticed is that of the plantain, which really is of extraordinary size, and used by the natives to hold their boiled rice.

† This odd trial is found only in the French and Crusca (not in Ramusio), and I have not been able to trace any actual confirmation of it. It is, however, distinctly stated that the sannyasi, when raised to the rank of great gurus or teachers in the temples, are required, from that moment, to renounce all the pursuits and pleasures of life, and most especially the society and even sight of the female sex.—Dubois, p. 353. Buchanan, vol. i. p. 22; vol. iii. p. 79.

perfidious idolaters, who burn the bodies of their dead, because otherwise they would breed worms, which after eating the flesh would starve, and thus involve in great sin the soul to which the body belonged. But I will now cease saying any more about them.

XXIV.—City of Cail.

Cail is a great and noble city, belonging to Asciar, eldest of the five brother-kings. Its port is frequented by all the ships from the west, Curmos, Quisci, Aden, and the whole of Arabia, laden with merchandise and horses. The merchants bring them hither as to a good market, frequented by purchasers from other quarters.* The king possesses immense treasures, and wears many precious stones. He rules his nation very justly and uprightly, for which cause the merchants frequent it, and afford him great profit. He has three hundred wives and upwards, holding it a high honour to increase their number. When discord arises among the five brother-kings, their mother, who is still alive, rushes between them, and will not allow them to fight. Often, when they

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* Cail or Kael is mentioned by different early travellers as an important haven. Mr Marsden finds the name in Valentyn's map, near Tutacorin, in the Tinnevelly country. This, as will appear in the following chapter, would entirely derange our traveller's itinerary; which, however little it may be regarded by him, we reluctantly admit. The term, signifying pagoda, is found attached to different spots. We would suggest Point Calymere, called by D'Anville Callamera Pagode. In fact, Milburn (vol. i. p. 364) mentions that there are here two remarkable temples; a circumstance affording strong presumption of there having formerly been an important city; and at half a mile's distance is still a large village, with considerable trade. Here the passage from Ceylon is shortest, and the small distance formerly stated shows this to be the vicinity to which they crossed; and there has never hitherto been the least mention of any movement southward. In the Crusca, and in an Italian MS. of the French library, the name is *Caver*, at once suggesting the great river Cavery, which falls into the sea not far from Point Calymere. We cannot, it may be said, take the benefit of both names; yet it seems impossible not to attach importance to this curious circumstance. If we place Cail here, it will be presently shown that the traveller's itinerary becomes perfectly correct.

will not yield to her prayer, and are about to engage, she takes a knife and says, " If you will not renounce this quarrel, I will kill myself presently, and cut away the paps with which I gave you milk." When the sons see this great piety in their mother, they feel themselves bound to make peace. But as soon as she is dead, they cannot fail to quarrel and destroy each other.

All the natives here, as well as generally throughout India, have continually in their mouths the leaf called *tembul*. It affords them gratification, and its use has become quite habitual; after chewing they spit out the moisture. The rich mix it with camphor and other aromatic drugs, and even with quick-lime. When any one wishes to insult another in the grossest manner, he spits this juice in his face. The injured party then hastens to the king, and declares his wish to decide the quarrel by combat. His majesty furnishes him with a sword and small shield; and all the people assemble as spectators of the conflict, which is only terminated by the death of one of the parties. They are not, however, allowed to strike with the point of the sword.* Now let us depart and tell you of the kingdom of Coilon.

XXV.—Kingdom of Coilon.

After departing from Maabar, and going south-west 500 miles, you arrive at Coilon.† The people are ido-

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* This paragraph is only in Ramusio, where the sentence referring to betel in the earlier editions has been expunged, in order to prepare for it. The custom of mixing it with spices, and even quick-lime, is correctly stated. In regard to the other particulars, the only confirmation which Mr Marsden could find is, that judicial duelling is practised at Onore, on the opposite coast of Malabar.

† Koulam, *Ramusio*. Mr Marsden naturally enough supposes this to be Coulan, on the western coast, about 100 miles beyond Cape Comorin. Count Boni, however, has clearly shown that the place of that name described by Marco and other early Europeans lay to the *east* of that great promontory, from which D'Anville makes it 15, and Rennell 60 miles distant. Milburn has it still in his map. Coilon being thus fixed here, and taking Cail at or near Calymere, the route of 500 miles south-west becomes perfectly correct, instead of the enormous errors other-

laters, yet among them are Christians and Jews. They have languages of their own, and a king tributary to no one. In this territory grows extremely good brazil-wood, called coilomin. Pepper greatly abounds, being collected in the months of May, June, and July; the trees are carefully planted and irrigated. Indigo also is very plentiful and good, being made of an herb which they place in a great vessel, then pour in water, and leave it till the juice is given out. Being then placed in the hot sun, it boils, acquires consistence, and becomes what we see. In this country the heat of the sun can scarcely be endured; if you put an egg into any river, it will be boiled before you have gone any great distance. Hither resort many merchants from Manji, Arabia, and the Levant, bringing quantities of goods, and carrying away those of the country. There are various animals different from all others in the world; such as a black lion, without either spot or mark; parrots of numerous kinds, some white as snow, with red beak and feet; others red and white, most lovely; and some extremely small, and also very beautiful. The peacocks are much larger, handsomer, and of a different species from ours. The domestic fowls are also peculiar; in short, they have all things, fruits, beasts, and birds, dissimilar to ours, and both handsomer and better. They have no grain but rice, and make a wine from sugar, which is good, and intoxicates sooner than that from grapes. Every thing necessary to support life abounds. Here are a number of skilful astrologers and physicians, who know how to preserve the human body in health. Both sexes are completely black, and wear no covering except a fine cloth about the middle.* Their behaviour to each

wise imputable, and which would have been a heavy blot in respect to a space which he himself actually traversed.

* These details resemble those formerly given, and are generally correct. This being the most southern quarter of India, the heat is of course peculiarly intense. The rude process of manufacturing indigo is said to be very tolerably described. By the lion, the traveller usually means the tiger; and this species, as well as the panther, is stated by Paolino to be here of a very dark colour.

other shows little sense of propriety. A man will marry his cousin-german, the widow of his father, and even of his brother; this is the custom among all the people of India.

XXVI.—Comari (Cape Comorin).

Comari is a country of India, remarkable in this respect, that the north-star, which we had not seen since leaving Java, appeared to us when thirty miles out at sea, rising about a cubit above the horizon. There are few domestic, but abundance of wild animals, particularly monkeys of various shapes, some of which would almost seem to be men. There are cats of a very peculiar and wonderful species, lions, leopards, and ounces in great numbers.* I will now proceed to Eli.

XXVII.—Eli or Dely.

Eli is a kingdom, about 300 miles west of Comari. The people are subject to a king, idolaters, with a peculiar language, and independent of foreigners. I will tell you fully their customs and manners, which you will understand better, as we approach nearer home. There is no port except a large river, with a good entrance. Pepper grows in great abundance, and there is a considerable produce of ginger and other spices. The king is very rich, but not powerful in men; yet his dominions have such strong approaches, that he has no dread of invasion. If any vessel destined for another port is driven hither by stress of weather, the people seize and possess themselves of all its cargo, saying, "You were going to another place, but God sends you and yours to me." In this they think themselves quite guiltless. Ships come

* Comari is evidently the country around Cape Comorin, the southern promontory of India. While Coilon was supposed to be westward, it appeared entirely misplaced; but when the former is fixed in the east, the cape comes quite in its place. The adjacent territory is really described as rude and thinly inhabited. The former disappearance of the north-star, which seems to mean the Greater Bear, must have been owing to the season of the year, not, as he seems to suppose, to his place on the earth, for his track had for some time been considerably farther north.

from Manji and other parts in the summer, load in eight days, and depart as soon as possible, there being no port, but dangerous sandbanks. Those of Manji are least apprehensive, being provided with large wooden anchors. There are here lions and other wild beasts, with good hunting.*

XXVIII.—Melibar or Malabar.

Melibar is a great kingdom towards the westward, with a sovereign and languages of its own.† The people are idolaters, and subject to no foreigner. Here the north-star, at its greatest height, appears two cubits above the water. From this and an adjacent province named Gozurat, there issue annually a body of upwards of a hundred vessels, who capture other ships and plunder the merchants. Being sea-robbers, they carry with them their wives and children, and remain together all the summer, doing great injury to trade. These wicked corsairs form what they call a ladder on the sea; twenty of them place themselves five miles from each other, and thus command a hundred miles in extent. When a merchantman comes in view, a light is kindled,

* Eli or Dely is evidently derived from Mount Delly, a small space north of Cananor. A little southward it is a broad river, with a port anciently flourishing; but Paolino found it, even in his time, almost closed up, the trade being probably transferred to Cananor and Calicut. The distance is very correct; but the traveller here and all along this coast, has given the direction too much to the cardinal point of west, omitting to notice the great declination southward.

† This name is Malabar; but Mr Marsden imputes a very great error in beginning it here, while the small tract called by the natives Malayalam lies wholly south of Mount Delly. Marco, however, would naturally take the information from his Arab pilots; and that nation, followed by modern Europeans, invariably ascribe to it a much greater extension. The very term is Arabic, and, as well as the native one, means mountain-country, which is applicable to the whole range of this western coast. It is admitted that Abulfeda uses it in this extended sense; and Linschoten, ch. xlii. p. 77, states the Malabars as extending from Goa to Cape Comorin; which would, we apprehend, nearly coincide with the popular ideas in modern Europe.

which is repeated by one after another; so that no vessel sailing here can escape them. The mariners, however, knowing well their wicked customs, come well armed and prepared, and fight a desperate battle, often beating them off with loss; but at other times fall into their hands. The pirates then take the ship with all the goods, but do no injury to the men, saying to them, "Go and collect another cargo, that we may have a chance of getting it too."*

In this country is a vast abundance of pepper, and also of ginger, with a good supply of cinnamon and other spices, also cubebs and cocoa-nuts. Cotton cloths, the most beautiful and delicate in the whole world, are here manufactured, with other valuable articles.† To purchase these goods, the merchants from other quarters bring copper, which they use as ballast; cloths of silk and gold, sandal-wood, and other spices. Ships come even from the great province of Manji; and the dealers here convey the goods to various quarters in the west, whence the most valuable are forwarded to Alexandria. Having told you now of Melibar, we shall go to Gozurat, but it would be too tedious to inform you of all the cities of these countries, they are so very numerous.

XXIX.—Kingdom of Gozurat.‡

Gozurat, too, is a great kingdom to the west, having

* Nothing can be more accordant with the tenor of history than the piratical habits which the author ascribes to this and the adjoining province. The rude temper of the mountaineer tribes, and the numerous small harbours along the coast, have led in almost every age to this enormity. Even Ptolemy has designated it the coast of the pirates; and Pliny complains of the losses there sustained by the East India trade. The only exception perhaps is at the present, when it has been nearly put down by the superior navy of Britain. In our traveller's time, there appears to have been no dominant power to keep the marauders in check.

† This coast is well known as the chief quarter whence Europe is supplied with pepper; and it is rich in other spices, though of less importance. The cotton manufacture also flourishes, but the author is rather hasty in using again the superlative degree, already applied to those of Masulipatam.

‡ It is impossible not to be startled by finding the name of

languages and a king of its own, and subject to no other. Here the north-star rises to the apparent height of six cubits. The greatest pirates in the world live here, and have a most wicked custom; after taking a merchant, they make him drink tamarinds and sea-water, then examine carefully if he voids any pearls or precious stones, which are alleged to be usually swallowed on such emergencies.* There is in this land a great quantity of pepper and indigo, with a good deal of ginger. Cotton also abounds, and the trees which bear it, when twenty years old, rise to the height of six paces; but the produce is then unfit to be spun, and can only be used for quilting. Before twelve years, it is well fitted for the former purpose.† An immense quantity of dressed leather is prepared from the skins of the goat,

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Guzerat applied to this coast, under which it is never recognised by Europeans, while he will be found not applying the term to that so named by us. On this last point, however, Mr Elphinstone (History of India, vol. i. p. 550) states, that the name is not known to the natives, who use those of Soreth and Kattiwar. Mr Hamilton (Gazetteer of India, vol. i. p. 601) remarks, that the greater part of Malwa and Khandeish was formerly named Guzerat. Indeed, this must have been the original application of the term, only extended to the peninsula by its becoming part of the same viceroyalty. This brings it very close to the district here mentioned; and the same power may at the time have ruled over both. Linschoten, chaps. ix, x, mentions, that all the ports on this coast contained numerous Gozuratis, whom he combines with the Banians as the most active merchants. Abulfeda agrees with our author in stating Malabar and Guzerat as confining with each other.

* This coast, which includes the tract called the Concan, really is still more infamous for piracy than the one farther south. At Gheria, in the last century, Angria had established a kind of piratical kingdom, which the utmost efforts of the British navy were required to extirpate.—Account of India (Edinburgh Cabinet Library), vol. ii. p. 119-121.

† The species described here is not the common cotton shrub, which is an annual, but the *bombax* or silk-cotton tree. In Ramusio, it is said to be "suitable for muslins and other manufactures of extraordinary fineness." Mr Marsden reasonably suspects this to be a corruption; and, in fact, the French and other early editions merely say, as in the text, "well fitted for spinning." Even this is going too far; and the author seems to have been led into confusion by supposing the annual plant to be the bombax in a young state.

the buffalo, the wild ox, unicorn, and various other animals, and it is largely exported to Arabia and adjoining regions. Coverlets of red leather are also framed, with representations of birds and beasts, most delicately interwoven with gold and silver thread. They are wonderfully beautiful, and being used by the Saracens for sleeping upon, are worth ten marcs of silver. There are also cushions woven with gold, valued at ten marcs. In short, this leather is embroidered for royal use, more delicately than in any other part of the world.*

XXX.—Tana (Bombay).

Tana is a great kingdom in the west ; the inhabitants idolaters, with a language of their own, under a sovereign subject to no other. It does not produce pepper, or such spices as the other provinces ; but yields incense, not white, but of a brown colour.† There is a great trade in leather finely dressed, also in good cotton, both raw and made into cloth. The merchants import gold, silver, brass, and other goods necessary for these kingdoms, receiving various articles in return. But I have a bad thing to tell you ; for many pirates issue hence, scouring the sea, and greatly injuring the sailors ; and the king sanctions their conduct, having made an agreement, that they bring to him all the horses captured, which are very numerous, being in great request over all India. But gold, silver, precious stones, and the rest of the cargo, belong to themselves. Now this is bad and very unjust conduct. Let us leave this country and speak of Cambaia.

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* We are not accustomed to view this as an Indian manufacture ; yet Linschoten describes it in nearly the same terms ; so that it appears to have flourished at an early period. The practice of dyeing skins still prevails.

† The name in Ramusio is Kanan ; in others Chana and Caria ; but Mr Marsden justly infers that the real one is Tana, on the island of Salsette near Bombay ; and this name is really found in the French and Crusca editions. Marco is correct in stating that no pepper is here produced. The incense described is gum benzoin ; but Mr Marsden infers that it must have been imported from Sumatra, and only seen in the warehouses here.

XXXI.—Kingdom of Cambaia.

This is a great kingdom to the west; the people idolaters, with a language of their own, and a ruler subject to no other. Here the north-star appears more fully, as it always does the farther you go westward. This region is rich and productive, particularly in excellent indigo; also cotton, both raw and manufactured, which is exported to many other countries. I may add, many hides are dressed, and worked with a skill nowhere surpassed; also other articles too tedious to enumerate. The foreign merchants bring mostly gold, silver, and brass. The people are not pirates, but honest; living by trade and manufacture.* And now I will tell you of Semenat.

XXXII.—Kingdom of Semenat (Sumnaut).

This is a great country to the westward. The inhabitants are idolaters, with languages of their own, and a monarch subject to no other. They are not pirates, but live by trade and industry, as good men ought to do. The country is rich, and frequented by many merchants. The people, however, are fierce and cruel idolaters.†

Kesmacoran is a kingdom with a sovereign and languages of its own. The people are idolaters, and raise abundance of rice, on which and on flesh and milk

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* This is evidently Camboia, an important kingdom, the capital of which is situated at the head of the gulf of that name. The latter bounds the peninsula of Guzerat, of which probably a considerable part is here included. The shores of this inlet being out of the great maritime route, were not a natural seat of piracy, with which indeed this country has never been reproached.

† This is evidently Sumnaut or Puttan Sumnaut, celebrated for its splendid temple, destroyed in 1024 by Mahmoud the Ghiznevide. See Account of British India (Edinburgh Cabinet Library), vol. i. p. 194-196. The name is here generally applied to the territory which we call Guzerat. The bad character of the people is supposed by Mr Marsden to have been dictated by religious antipathies; but it appears in fact that the Kattees or natives of Kattiwar are peculiarly barbarous and ferocious, exceeding in this respect their neighbours the Rajpoots, themselves fiercer than the other Hindoos.—Trans. Bombay Literary Society, vol. i. pp. 265, 273, 274.

they subsist. There is a great trade by sea and land, but nothing else worth mentioning.* Now this is the last province found in India, in proceeding between west and north-west; and all the kingdoms already described, from Maabar to this, belong to that India which is called the Greater, and is the first of any in the world. I have, however, only mentioned those on the seacoast, since to treat of the inland ones would have been too tedious. I shall therefore proceed to notice certain islands, also belonging to India, and first two called Male and Female.

† XXXIII.—Islands called Male and Female.

The isle called Male is full 500 miles out at sea, south of Kesmacoran. The people are baptized Christians, attached to the law and customs of the Old Testament; they are very reserved in their intercourse with their wives. All the latter, indeed, dwell in another isle which is called Female. The men go and reside there three months in the year—March, April, and May—when they

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* Mr Marsden states that he felt difficulty as to this name, till he applied to Major Rennell, who suggested that it was the same with Kidg-Makran, usually applied in India to Mekran, the most southern province of Persia. Kidg he supposed to have been an ancient metropolis, whose name, according to a usage prevalent in India, was joined to that of the country. Pottinger, accordingly, found Kedge to be the actual capital of Mekran. Having sailed along this extensive coast, Marco would enter the Persian Gulf, and conclude his voyage; but we shall find him now describing on hearsay the extensive regions on the western shores of the Indian Ocean.

† We have observed that the Poli, with their fair charge, would undoubtedly steer from the coast of Guzerat to the Persian Gulf, with the view of landing at Ormus. In undertaking, therefore, to give us a view of the western borders of the Indian Ocean, Marco could only be guided by the reports of his Arab pilots. Though daring and skilful in their vocation, they could not be men of highly cultivated minds, and were probably deeply imbued with that taste for the marvellous, indicated by the publication, during that century, of the celebrated fiction of the Arabian Nights. Mr Crawfurd has remarked the probability that at Sumatra he would be obliged to take on board pilots of this nation, the influence of whose spirit may perhaps be remarked during the whole of the subsequent voyage.

return to their own residence, and spend the remaining nine months in labour. In this isle is found very fine and beautiful amber. The people live on rice, milk, and flesh, and excel in fishing, capturing enough both for their own food and for exportation. They have no ruler except a bishop subject to the Archbishop of Scotra, and have languages of their own. The isle where their wives reside is thirty miles distant; but they could not live if they spent the whole year with them. The sons remain with their mothers till the age of fourteen, when they go to join their fathers in their separate abode.*

XXXIV.—Isle of Scotra.

About 500 miles south from these isles you find that of Scotra, the people of which are baptized Christians, and have an archbishop. Ambergris is very plentiful, being voided from the entrails of whales, which are pursued most actively, in order to obtain this precious article. They strike into the animal a barbed iron so firmly that it cannot be drawn out. A long line attached enables them to discover the place where the dead fish lies, and drag it to the shore, when they extract from its belly the ambergris, and from its head several casks of oil.† Fine cotton cloth is made; and

* Mr Marsden supposes the islands here meant to be those named Abd-al-curia or the Two Sisters, lying to the west of Socotra; and Count Boni coincides. I cannot but remark, however, that they are placed midway between Mekran and this last, 500 miles from each, and the total 1000 is necessary, and indeed not quite sufficient, to make up the distance. The two islands would, by the above supposition, be on the opposite side of Socotra, and very near it, while the whole description seems to indicate them as remote from any other land. Count Boni, indeed, was informed by M. Zurla, that in the Soranzo MS. the distance is made only forty miles; but this codex, being proved to be of secondary importance, can scarcely stand against the united voice of all the others. I cannot help suspecting the whole to be a mere flight of Arabian fancy. Mr Marsden has found in Barbosa, and Count Boni in De Barros, representations of the females of Socotra as somewhat Amazonian, both as to valour and separation from the other sex.

† This passage, though only in Ramusio, gives a tolerably

abundance of good salt fish prepared. The people subsist on rice, milk, and flesh; and go naked after the manner of the other idolatrous Indians. To this island come many ships and merchants; and indeed all those destined for Aden touch there. The archbishop has no connexion with the See of Rome, but is subject to a primate resident at Bagdad, who appoints him, as well as sends mandates to bishops and prelates in other quarters of the world. Hither, too, repair many corsairs with their ships, to sell their booty, and find a ready market, because the Christians, knowing it to have been abstracted from idolaters and Saracens, scruple not to purchase.*

I can tell you, moreover, that these Christians are the most skilful enchanters in the world. The archbishop, indeed, forbids and even punishes this practice, but without any avail; for their ancestors, they say, followed it before them, and they will continue. For instance, if a ship is proceeding full sail with a favourable wind, they raise a contrary one, and oblige it to return. They can make it blow from any quarter they please, and cause either a dead calm or a violent tempest.†

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correct account of the capture of the spermaceti whale. The opinion here given of the origin of ambergris has been controverted, but is the one now generally received. See Macculloch's Commercial Dictionary, p. 30.

* Socotra is not much frequented now, when vessels studiously steer through the open ocean; but in an age when they kept close to the coast, it became necessarily a main thoroughfare for those passing between the respective shores of Asia and Africa. Mr Marsden has successfully proved its having then been so, from the best early authorities. The same situation would naturally render it the haunt of pirates; indeed Abulfeda actually charges the people as themselves engaged in that enormity. There is also abundant proof of their having embraced Christianity under a schismatic form, the Nestorian or Jacobite.

† A power over the winds is often claimed by sorcerers; and in this solitary island, surrounded by a stormy ocean, the pretension would be both *natural* and profitable. However little our readers may be inclined to admit it, there is ample proof of its being generally believed in by the early Portuguese navigators.

They perform many other marvellous enchantments, which it would be wrong to relate; they would excite such amazement. We shall therefore leave them, and describe the island of Madagascar.

XXXV.—Madagascar.

This is an island towards the south, about a thousand miles from Scotra. The people are Saracens, adoring Mohammed; and they have four sheiks, or old men, who rule the entire country. This is really one of the noblest and greatest islands in the world, being reputed 4000 miles in circuit. In no region are so many elephants bred, and their teeth sold, as here and in Zanghibar.* No flesh is eaten but that of camels, of which an incredible number are killed every day; and being supposed better and more wholesome than any other, it is used if possible during the whole year.† The red sandal grows here to the height of our forest trees, and is sold with advantage to foreigners. Ambergris also abounds, from the number of whales which, as you know, yield that

* The present is believed to be the first notice conveyed to Europe of this great island. Its dimensions are exaggerated, even if we take Ramusio's estimate of 3000; but in the earlier editions it is as here, 4000. Considering this, with the mention of the elephant and the giraffe,—animals not found in this island,—I have little doubt that the Arabs combined with their idea of Madagascar a large portion of the adjacent continent. Comparing the present with the following chapter, it will be seen that they had not traced in any continuous manner the coast of Eastern Africa, but had reached only detached portions, which they conceived to be large islands. From what is stated respecting the currents, they evidently had not penetrated through the Mozambique channel, and might easily suppose the numerous islands in the northern part to belong to a mass of land. The Moslem religion and Arab social system do not now exist; but there is full proof of their being formerly established, though expelled after the decline of that nation in Eastern Africa, where, even at the arrival of the Portuguese, they were found holding great sway.

† Camels are not found here; and though Marsden mentions instances of their flesh being prized as food, there can I think be no doubt that the animal alluded to is a peculiar species of ox or bison, with a hump on the shoulder, which Flacourt reports having been by some mistaken for a camel.

substance. There are leopards, ounces, and lions; likewise various other animals, such as stags, wild goats, and deer, some of great size. The birds are equally various, several wonderfully different from ours. Many ships arrive with abundance of goods, as cloths of silk and gold, which are profitably exchanged for those of the country. Mariners, however, cannot reach the other islands lying south of this and of Zanghibar, owing to the violence of the current running in this direction. It is such, that while vessels can come hither from Malabar in twenty days, they spend three months in returning.

Now I must mention, that in these southern isles, the birds called griffon are reported to exist, and to appear at certain seasons; yet they are not formed as we describe and paint them, half-bird, half-lion, but exactly like the eagle, only immeasurably larger. They are represented so huge and powerful, as to take up the elephant and carry him high into the air, then let him drop, whereby he is at once killed, and they feed upon his carcass. It is asserted that their wings are twelve paces long, and when spread out, extend thirty paces across; they are thick in proportion. I must add, that the khan sent messengers to obtain information about the country, and also the release of one of his subjects who had been made prisoner. They and the captive related to him many great wonders of these strange isles, and brought teeth of a wild boar, inconceivably large: I assure you, he found them to weigh fourteen pounds. You may thus judge as to the size of the boar; and indeed some are equal to a buffalo. There are also giraffes and wild asses, and other beasts and birds wonderfully different from ours. To return to the griffon; the people of the island do not know it by that name, but call it always *ruc;* but we, from their extraordinary size, certainly conclude them to be griffons.* Having nothing more to tell of this island, I will go on to that of Zanghibar.

* The bird mentioned in this curious paragraph appears to be either the albatross, which, though proper to more southern latitudes, may have occasionally visited the shores of Mada-

XXXVI.—Coast of Zanghibar.

This is a very great and noble island, about 2000 miles in circuit.* The people are all idolaters, have languages and a king of their own, and are subject to no other power. They are not very tall, but so broad and thick, that in this respect they appear like giants; and they are likewise immensely strong, bearing as large a burden as four other men, which is really no wonder, for they eat as much as five. They are perfectly black, and go naked, with the exception of a cloth round the waist. Their mouth is so wide, their nose so turned up, their lips and eyes so big, that they are horrible to behold,† and any one meeting them in another country

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gascar, or else the condor of Southern Africa. The former has been known to measure from wing to wing 15 feet, the latter above 10. In either case the exaggeration is very great; the statement, however, varies much; for the extreme length, instead of 30 paces as here, in the Crusca is only 20, and in Ramusio 16. The latter adds the account of a feather 90 spans long, and the quill part two palms in circumference, which was carried to the great khan, by whom it was greatly admired. As nothing of all this is found in any early edition except the Italian Museum MS.,—not a first authority,—we may conclude it to be the unauthorized embellishment of some faithless translator. The statement rests only on the warm fancy of the Arabs, here peculiarly excited by the mention of such a gigantic bird in the Arabian Nights, from which in fact they have borrowed the name *rukh*. Nay, there appears to be throughout Asia a superstitious belief of its existence. The identity with the griffon is admitted in the French version, here followed, to be a comment of the writer's own, for which I have no doubt we are indebted to the romantic studies of Rusticians; so that two schools of fable have been at work in producing this extraordinary paragraph.

The boar here mentioned appears to be the boschwerk, called by Linnæus *sus ethiopicus*. It has four tusks, the two largest of which, nine inches long and five in circumference, project like horns, being turned up at the end, and rendering the animal truly formidable (Barrow's Africa, vol. i. p. 303). A large specimen might possess such a dimension as is here stated.

* This is evidently the part of the eastern coast of Africa usually called Zanguebar, which signifies country of the Ethiopians or Negroes. We pointed out under the last chapter that want of the knowledge of Africa, viewed as a continent, which probably led the Arabs to consider this and other districts as islands.

† We have here a picture of the negro, evidently drawn from

would believe them devils. Elephants abound, and a great traffic is carried on in their teeth; likewise lions of a peculiar species, with ounces and leopards. In short, they have all kinds of beasts different from others in the world; including sheep entirely white, with only the head black, and none of any other colour.* Here too is the giraffe, a most beautiful creature, whose shape I will describe. Behind, it is low, and the legs very short; while those before, and the neck, are very large, so that its head rises three paces from the ground. The animal is small, and is quite harmless; and its colour being red and white, in circles, it is very beautiful.† But there is a thing which I had forgotten about the elephant, that it caresses the female in the same manner as the human species. I must say, the women of this island are most ugly objects; with large mouth, eyes, and nose, and their breasts four times the ordinary size; in short, they are hideous. The people live on rice, flesh, milk, and dates, and though they have no vines, make a very good liquor of rice, sugar, and spices. There is a great trade, particularly in elephants' teeth; and a good quantity of amber. The men are very brave in combat, and have little fear of death. They have no horses, but fight upon camels and elephants, placing on them castles well covered, with sixteen or twenty men mounted on them, bearing lances, swords, and staves, and making a very powerful force in battle.‡ They have no arms except leathern shields,

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the life, yet very strongly caricatured. The traveller does not intimate whether he had ever seen one himself. Probably he had not, and received the description from his Arab shipmates.

* Mr Marsden finds this statement confirmed by Hamilton, a good authority.

† This elegant animal, now familiar in our menageries, is here correctly described.

‡ The traveller is correct as to the number of elephants, but appears mistaken in supposing them tamed and trained for war. They certainly were so by the Carthaginians; but there is no account of such a practice in modern times. He probably had seen them so employed in India, and on learning that they were here equally numerous, too hastily concluded that the same course would be followed. He is correct as to the want of horses.

lances, and swords, with which they fight well. When leading the elephant to the combat, they give him to drink of their wine or liquor, which renders him more fierce and effective. I must now proceed to the great province of Abascia, but first wish to say something more of India in general.

XXXVII.—The Islands in the Indian Sea.

You must know I have described only its noblest kingdoms and isles; those that make the flower of the region, and to which the rest are mostly subject. No man could enumerate all the islands; they are estimated at 12,700, inhabited and uninhabited, according to the writings of the most skilful mariners. In the Greater India, which extends from Maabar to Kesmacoran, are thirteen very great kingdoms, of which I have described ten. The Lesser India, stretching from Zinaba to Montifi, contains eight, and this is exclusive of numerous others that are in the islands.*

XXXVIII.—Kingdom of Abascia.

Abascia is a very great province, called the Middle India.† The supreme monarch is a Christian; the other

* We have had occasion to observe the wide extension given to the name of India. Here are clearly distinguished three regions so named: the Greater, including Hindostan and Southern Persia; the Lesser, or the country beyond the Ganges; the Middle, meaning Abyssinia. Mr Marsden has found, in the early travellers, Conti and Barbosa, nearly the same limits and divisions applied to this celebrated name. Indeed, in the popular language of Europe, the term East Indies is still applied to all the southern coasts of Asia, exclusive of China; *East* being evidently added to distinguish it from the region since discovered and named the *West* Indies. The islands here mentioned are supposed by Mr Marsden to be the very numerous groups of the Maldives and Laccadives. He is doubtless so far correct; but considering the extension of the name eastward, it seems probable that the Oriental Archipelago is also included, especially when we find the mention of kingdoms in these islands. In Ramusio, Zinaba is Zampa (Tsiompa), the first kingdom reached after leaving China, while Montifi is Murphili, the name given in that edition to Masulipatam.

† This is evidently Abyssinia, and indeed the name here resembles more that of Habbesh, used by the natives. The Crusca has Nabasce.

six kings are subject to him, three being believers, and three Saracen. The christian people of this province have three marks upon their face, one from the forehead to the middle of the nose, and one on each cheek, made with a hot iron, and herein consists their baptism. There are also Jews having a mark on each cheek, and Saracens with only one on the forehead and nose.* The great king lives in the middle of the province; the Saracens towards Aden. In this district Messer St Thomas the apostle preached, and after converting the inhabitants, went to Maabar, where he died, and his body remains, as formerly mentioned. This country contains many good men-at-arms and well mounted cavalry, who are much needed; for wars are frequent with the Sultans of Aden† and Nubia, and with other powers. But I will tell you a memorable story of what happened in the year 1288. This king, who is lord over all Abascia, wished to go in pilgrimage to adore the sepulchre of Christ in Jerusalem. The barons represented the danger of the journey, and advised him to send a bishop or some other great prelate. The monarch having agreed, one of very holy life was chosen, who readily undertook the mission. He was equipped most handsomely as a pilgrim, and travelled by land and sea till he arrived at

* This practice of baptism by cauterizing is mentioned by Barbosa, Linschoten, and other early authors, being intended, it is said, to represent baptizing by fire. Ludolfus, a later but authentic historian, denies this on the authority of the Jesuit missionaries, and says that such marks, though sometimes made, are only as an imaginary preservative against cold. There seems, however, full testimony to their early existence as a rite, though perhaps it has fallen into disuse.

† This is evidently Adel, a great Mohammedan kingdom east of Abyssinia. The change from one liquid to another is easy, and indeed it is not improbable that the Arabian Aden might at one period have extended its name and power to this region. It is curious that in the Crusca, the one is called Adenti, the other Edenti. The long wars between the two kingdoms are fully commemorated by historians; Bruce observing, that the precise period here referred to formed nearly a blank in the annals of that kingdom, so that it is impossible to find any confirmation of the military events now to be related.

Jerusalem. Repairing to the sepulchre, he performed the due homage before an object so exalted; and having presented great offerings from the king, and well fulfilled his mission, he set out on his return. He passed through Aden, a country where Christians are hated as mortal enemies. The governor, learning that he professed this religion, and was a messenger of the sovereign of Abascia, warned him, that unless he embraced the law of Mohammed, he would suffer a shameful punishment. The bishop replied, that he would sooner die. The other, greatly enraged, ordered him to be forcibly circumcised, and then sent him away, telling him that this was meant as an affront to his master. The prelate was much grieved, but consoled himself by thinking that he had suffered for the law of his faith, and God would recompense him in the other world. As soon as he could travel, he proceeded to Abascia, and appeared before the king; who, having inquired about the sepulchre, and being told the whole truth, accounted it a most holy and pious visit. The bishop then related the affront put upon him by the ruler of Aden, when his majesty fell into such a transport of grief and rage, that he almost died. He called aloud in the hearing of all the bystanders, that he would never wear a crown, nor rule a province, till he had taken such vengeance as should be spoken of throughout the world. Presently he prepared a vast body of troops, on horseback and foot, also elephants with well-armed castles, having twenty men upon each. He then set out and marched directly onward to the territory of Aden. Its chiefs, with a great multitude of Saracens on foot and horseback, came to defend their country, and a most obstinate battle was fought; but the enemy could not withstand the force of the King of Abascia, because the Christians are more valiant. They fled and were slain in great numbers. The victor, entering the country in three or four places, greatly wasted and destroyed it, killing many of the inhabitants. He then thought the affront sufficiently avenged; and in-

deed I must tell you he could effect no farther devastation, the region being extensive, and full of dangerous passes, where a few men could greatly harass an army.*

I will now relate other matters of Abascia, which yields a great variety of all things necessary for subsistence. The people live on rice, flesh, milk, and sesamum, and have elephants, not bred there, but brought from the isle of the other India. Giraffes, however, are in great numbers; also lions, leopards, ounces, wild apes, and many beasts and birds different from ours. The domestic fowls are the most beautiful in the world; and the ostriches as large as asses. They have parrots, beautiful and various; also monkeys and cats of two species, with faces exactly like those of men. This Abascia contains numerous cities and castles, and is much frequented by merchants; many cloths of cotton and buckram are wrought there.† I might relate other things, but must now go on to the province of Aden.

XXXIX.—City and Kingdom of Aden.

This country is subject to a lord, called sultan. The people are all Saracens, adoring Mohammed, and wishing the greatest mischief to Christians. There are many cities and castles; for Aden is the port to which the Indian ships bring all their merchandise. It is then placed on board other small vessels, which ascend a river about seven days, at the end of which it is disembarked, laden on camels, and conveyed thirty days farther. It then comes to the river of Alexandria, and is conveyed down to that city. By this route alone its inhabitants

* In Ramusio, the king is represented as having taken and pillaged the capital. Mr Marsden is perplexed by finding no record of any such complete success. The text here given from the early editions exhibits it as only a partial and temporary inroad.

† This description of Abyssinia is tolerably accurate, considering the channels through which it was procured; though its features are not sufficiently distinguished from those of the southern and central parts of Africa. The isle alluded to is probably Zanzibar. In Ramusio, the country is described as extremely rich in gold; an error not in the early editions.

receive their pepper, spices, and costly goods.* From Aden, too, ships sail for India with various goods, especially very fine and valuable horses, which, as you know, are sold there for full a hundred marks of silver. The sultan draws a great revenue from the duties on these cargoes; and is thus one of the richest princes in the world. But, I assure you, he did great injury to the Christians; for when the governor of Babylonia attacked and took the city of Acre, committing much devastation, he was assisted by this prince with 30,000 horses and 40,000 camels. This aid was given rather out of hatred to believers than good-will to that prince.† But now I will tell you of another great city.

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* The splendour and prosperity of Aden in this age is confirmed partially by the oriental writers, and more fully by Barbosa. Moore draws from it the image—

"Blooming as Aden in its earliest hour."

This wealth was derived, as here stated, from its being then the main channel by which the Indian commodities reached Europe by way of Alexandria. At that time, it appears, large vessels did not venture upon the intricate navigation of the Red Sea, and their cargoes were discharged at this city. After the passage of the Cape, and the improved navigation by which they were enabled to ascend, Aden sunk into a mere place of refreshment for seafaring persons. In this view, and as subservient to steam navigation, the British government have recently purchased it, but find it difficult to maintain against the barbarous tribes of the interior.

In all the early editions, including Pipino and Gryneus, the Red Sea is by mistake called a *river*. The Arabic term *bahr*, water, is used indiscriminately in this sense, and in that of sea or lake. This circumstance often causes confusion, and might easily mislead our traveller. In Ramusio, it is properly called a gulf. He, or another modern editor, might easily have the information necessary to make this correction. The voyage is also stated at twenty days, a more suitable time.

† The sultan here alluded to is supposed to be Saladin, the celebrated ruler of Egypt; for Cairo was in that age called Babylonia, having, after the fall of Bagdad, become the capital seat of Mohammedan power (Boni, p. 467). The French, Crusca, and the Paris Latin give no date; but Pipino, Gryneus, and Ramusio have 1200. The true one was 1187; but they might be giving a round number, without attempting precision.

XL.—City of Escier (Shaher).

Escier is a very large town to the north-west (north), four hundred miles from Aden.* A count here rules with justice, but subject to the soldan of Aden; and the people are Saracens, adoring Mohammed. The port is good, frequented by many ships and merchants from India, who bring various commodities, and carry away others, particularly horses of great value, and yielding large profit. In this province grows a great quantity of fine incense, also of dates.† They have no grain except rice, and little of that; hence corn is profitably imported from other countries. Fish is caught in such plenty, that for a Venetian gros you may purchase two large tunnies. The people live on rice, flesh, and fish, and have no wine except what they make from sugar, rice, and dates. But I must tell you, too, that they have sheep without ears, or any opening for them; but where the ears should be, is a little horn; these are small and very beautiful creatures.‡ Another thing you will much

* There is a singular discrepancy here as to the distance; for while the Crusca and Paris Latin have four miles, Pipino and Ramusio have forty, and the early French 400. This last is undoubtedly correct, for Mr Marsden, notwithstanding his erroneous versions, clearly recognises here the Schähhr of Niebuhr, Sahar of D'Anville, situated at exactly 400 miles from Aden. Mr Wellsted describes it under the name of Shaher, as still the largest town on this part of the Arabian coast, extending a mile and a quarter in length (Travels in Arabia, vol. ii. p. 443). In this, however, and the two following routes, the early editions commit the heavy error of making the direction north-*west* instead of north-*east*. I incline to suspect a mistake of transcription; for *tramontane* (north) might easily, in bad MS., be mistaken for *vermaistre* (north-west). It is curious that Pipino, Gryneus, and the French of 1565, really have *north*, which is correct, allowing for the frequent habit of orienting to a cardinal point. We may refer to our observations in a former instance, in which these middle editions were correct, while the early and later ones were erroneous. Ramusio has a different mistake, making it south-east; while the Italian Museum MS. has ostro (south).

† The coast of Hadramaut, here described, is celebrated for its copious production of incense; and the valuable spice named oliban or frankincense, seems peculiar to it.—Marsden, pp. 730, 731.

‡ Mr Marsden has not been able to find any account of this pe-

wonder at is, that all the animals, sheep, oxen, and camels, eat fish, because there is no grass, for it is the most arid place in the world. These fishes are very small, caught in March, April, and May, in wonderful quantities. They are dried, lodged in houses, and given as food to the animals during the whole year. The people eat them also when quite alive and newly taken. There are also plenty of large ones, which being made into a kind of biscuit, by cutting them into small pieces and drying them in the sun, are preserved under cover during the whole year.* The incense, mentioned as so abundant, is purchased by their lord at ten golden bezants the cantar, and retailed to the merchants for forty, so that he makes a very large profit. Let us now leave this city, and tell you of Dufar.

XLI.—City of Dufar.

This is a beautiful, large, and noble city, 500 miles south-west from Escier.† The people are Saracens, adoring Mohammed, and ruled by a count, who is subject to Aden, to which, indeed, this city belongs. The

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culiar species; but the varieties of the sheep are numerous. One reared in this arid country would of course be diminutive. The want of ears would doubtless be suggested by the absence or small size of the exterior appendage.

* Extremely little is known of this coast; but in regard to that on the Persian Gulf, which is exactly similar, Niebuhr and Chardin fully confirm the copious supply of fish, and the practice of feeding cattle with them. This, indeed, is a natural resource, where this food is so abundant, and vegetables so scanty. On the opposite side of the gulf, where circumstances are similar, the same particulars are noticed by Arrian, in his Voyage of Nearchus.

† Dufar, or Dofar, is a well-known port in Arabia, and the distance here stated (from the French) is just about the actual one from Shaher. The other editions commit strange errors; the Crusca and Paris Latin have five, Ramusio twenty miles. The direction is, as before, erroneous, doubtless from the same cause, whatever that may be. This chapter is omitted in Pipino and Gryneus; otherwise we may presume the right direction would have been there given. Mr Wellsted, in his late survey, found the district not very flourishing, with no port that could be reckoned more than a village. Dofar, however, was the principal one, surrounded by a well-cultivated country.—Vol. ii. p. 453.

port is very good, and merchants convey thence many very fine Arabian horses. Numerous cities and castles depend upon it, and the country yields much incense. The trees are about the size of a small fir, and incisions are made with knives in various places, whence flows the incense, which, indeed, through the great heat, often runs out of itself. I shall now proceed to relate of the Gulf of Calatu.

XLII.—Gulf and City of Calatu.

Calatu is a large city within the gulf of the same name, six hundred miles north-west from Dufar.* It is a noble seaport, inhabited by Saracens, who are subject to Cormos. When the melik of that city is at war with a more powerful prince, he retires to this place, which is strong by nature and art, and finds himself secure. The people have no grain but what they import. Many ships bring the goods and spices of India, which are distributed throughout the interior, and many fine horses sent in return. But I must observe, that this city is at the mouth of the Gulf of Calatu, so that the melik can prevent vessels from sailing in or out without his consent. This power he often uses against the sultan of Creman; for when that prince demands any exorbitant tribute from him or other vassals, they remove from Cormos to Calatu, and allow no ships to pass, whence the other prince suffers severely, and is obliged to abate his demands. The people of this country live on dates

* This is Kalhat, near a cape of the same name, at the entrance of the Persian Gulf, on the western side. The distance from Dofar here given (from the French) is correct; in the other editions it is absurd,—in the Paris Latin six, in Ramusio fifty miles. The place has no longer any existence, and Mr Marsden imagines it must have included Muscat, probably at that time under its dependence; but this is impossible, the two sites being 100 miles distant. Mr Wellsted lately visited that of Kalhat, and found it covered by extensive ruins, fully confirming that early splendour and importance which our traveller ascribes to it. Only one mosque remained entire, and there was a small fishing-village to the north.—Travels in Arabia, vol. i. p. 41.

and salt fish, which are abundant; but many rich men are well supplied with better food.

XLIII.—Return to Cormos.

After departing from Calatu, and sailing three hundred miles between north-west and north, you find the city of Cormos;* but if you take a direction from the former place between north-west and north, and sail five hundred miles, you come to Quis. However, we shall pass over this last place, and speak of Cormos, a large and noble capital, subject to a melik, who commands many towns and castles. The people are Saracens, and adore Mohammed. The heat is very great, on which account every house is provided with ventilators placed on the side whence the wind blows, which being thus admitted, renders the mansion tolerably cool. We gave an account of this place formerly, as well as of Quis and Creman, but have since made a circuit which brought us back to it. However, we will say no more, but proceed now to the description of Great Turkey.†

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* *Ormus.*—This voyage was probably performed by Marco himself, on his way from India to Persia; and he is strictly correct as to distance and direction. The latter is erroneous in Ramusio,—north-east.

† In the Crusca, it is said:—"In now returning, we will relate all the particulars that we had omitted." This is more fully expressed in Ramusio:—"Before bringing the work to a conclusion, I shall step back and notice some regions lying towards the north, which I omitted to speak of in the preceding book." There is nothing of this in the French, which I am persuaded is here the genuine text, while the other editors have interpolated their own ideas on the subject. The reader who attentively peruses the following chapters will perceive that the ground gone over is by no means the same as formerly. Tartar kingdoms and countries were indeed treated of, but these were in the east and north-east of Asia, the original seat of Mongol power. We are now introduced to those in the centre and north-west of that continent. We have seen that the Poli, after landing in Persia, escorted the two princesses to Casan or Ghazan, then commanding in Khorasan. I apprehend that the succeeding information is that collected during the residence there.

The following chapters will be chiefly new to the English reader, and include an historical account of the most remarkable events in the history of central and north-western Asia,

XLIV.—Turkestan—Wars of Kaidu.

This country lies to the north-west as you go from Cormos to the river Gihon, extending towards the territory of the great khan. It is governed by a nephew (cousin) of his, named Kaidu, grandson of Ciagatai,* brother to that monarch. He is a very powerful lord, ruling many cities and castles. His subjects are Tartars, very able combatants, much inured to fighting, and he does not obey the khan, but is rather at perpetual war with him. This is because Kaidu demanded constantly from that monarch a share of his conquests, particularly in Catai and Manji. The latter said he would willingly grant it to him, as to his other descendants, if he would come to his court and council whenever summoned. But the other, afraid to trust his uncle, offered

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during the thirty years preceding. Marco has not appeared to shine in respect to the early Mongol history; but we found reason to ascribe this to the ignorance prevalent at the court of Kublai. Ghazan, on the contrary, was a most accomplished and intelligent prince. He was the first who, by collecting the loose traditions, formed a written history of Gengis and his successors (Marsden, p. 198). De Guignes describes him as habitually studying the great actions of Cyrus and Alexander, and striving to imitate them. He formed a body of institutes in regard to all the branches of government, which are still observed in Persia, and have been translated into English by Colonel Kirkpatrick (Malcolm's History of Persia, vol. i. p. 438). There seems ground, therefore, to suppose, that the information obtained from him respecting recent events and adjacent countries, would be generally correct.

Ramusio, hitherto so copious, has omitted all this historical matter; so that it is unknown to Mr Marsden, of whose learned aid the editor is thus deprived. Nor has he obtained much from Count Boni, who has nearly confined his illustrations to Ramusio's text. He hopes, however, to prove, that the events now narrated accord in their general outline with the most authentic oriental histories. If there is a discrepancy respecting some important details, it is not greater than is found in these histories themselves; and there may perhaps appear reason to think that, in some instances, Marco's statement is the most correct yet given to the world.

* According to Abulghasi, he was grandson to Ugadai or Okkoday; his father, named Kashi, having died of excessive drinking. In either case, he will be cousin, not nephew, to Kublai; but our traveller is not very precise in these genealogical matters.

to obey him where he was, but dreaded that if in his power he would be put to death. Hence arose this discord, and the khan drew his forces around the realm of Kaidu to guard against an invasion; yet that prince contrived to penetrate, and fought repeatedly with the armies of Kublai; for he could bring into the field 100,000 brave and skilful horsemen. He had with him also many lords of the imperial lineage. Each soldier carries to battle sixty arrows, thirty smaller for shooting, and thirty larger, pointed with heavy iron, to throw against the face or arms of the enemy, or cut the cords of his bow; and when they have discharged all these, they lay their hand on their swords, and strike most terrible blows. Now, in the year 1266, this king, with his cousin named Jesudar, assembled a very great army, and marched against two barons that were also his relations, but held their lands from the great khan. Kaidu and his cousin fought with these two chiefs, who had also a very large force, so that between them there were 100,000 horsemen. They contended hardly and long, and many fell on both sides; but at last Kaidu conquered; however, the two barons, being well mounted, escaped without injury. The victor then became still more proud and boastful; yet he returned home and remained two years in peace. Then he assembled a mighty host of cavalry, having learned that at Karakorum there was a great army under Nomogan, a son of the khan, and George, a grandson of Prester John. He marched thither with all speed, and the two chiefs being informed of his approach, courageously prepared to meet him with their horsemen, amounting to upwards of 60,000. Having reached the place where his men were ranged in tents on the plain, they skilfully established their own camp. Each party rested and made preparations for three days, when they advanced to the combat. There was little advantage on either side; both having about 60,000 mounted men well armed at every point, divided into six squadrons of 10,000. They waited only till they heard their lord sound the

naccar; meantime performing loudly on various musical instruments. At length the signal was given, when the hosts rushed against each other, laying their hands on their bows. The arrows filled the air like rain; men and horses were mortally wounded; noise and cries arose so loud that the thunder of Jove could not have been heard. Truly this was an evil hour for many, who on both sides fell dead and dying. The arrows being discharged, they rushed on with sword and spear, giving and receiving most dreadful blows. You might see arms and hands cut off, and numbers of men rolling senseless on the earth. Kaidu displayed signal prowess, and his soldiers would have often been driven off the field, had he not encouraged and rallied them. On the other side, the two princes also firmly stood their ground, and it really was one of the most cruel battles ever fought between Tartar tribes. Yet though each strove with all his might to discomfit the other, neither could succeed, and the conflict lasted till evening. On this fatal day, multitudes of men fell, many wives were made widows, children made orphans, and households filled with tears and lamentations. But when the sun set, the struggle could endure no longer, and both parties returned to their camp overpowered with fatigue, happy to rest during the night. When morning dawned, King Kaidu, having received intelligence that the great khan was marching against him with a mighty host, deemed it unsafe to remain longer. Wherefore he and all his men mounted and rode off to their own country; the two princes were so exhausted, that they did not attempt to follow, so that he with his people reached Samarcand, the capital of his kingdom.*

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* We have been already introduced to Kaidu as the relation and imbittered enemy of Kublai. As he seems never to have been recognised as a regular sovereign, the notices of him in oriental history are extremely slight. De Guignes, however (tome iii. p. 185-187), mentions his repeated inroads, and particularly his attempts to obtain possession of Karakorum, which would have thrown great lustre on his arms. On occasion of the principal conflict, he represents the army as commanded

The great khan felt much wrath at Kaidu for committing such ravages, and bethought himself, that had he not been his nephew, he would have seized his land and put him to a cruel death; but regard to his own flesh restrained him. Thus he escaped out of the hand of the mighty monarch. But I have wonderful stories to tell you about a daughter of this prince.

XLV.—Exploits of a Tartar Princess, Daughter to Kaidu.

This young lady was in Tartar named Aigiarm, which means in our language "brilliant moon." She possessed such strength that none of the youths or nobles in the whole kingdom could vanquish her, but were all beaten. Her father wished to marry her to a baron; but she refused ever to unite herself to any one who could not vanquish her in fair combat; and the king granted her this privilege. She rejoiced greatly, and published through various parts of the world, that if any gentle youth would come, try her in pitched battle, and gain the victory, she would accept him for her lord. This

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by Bayam, the conqueror of Manji; but Kublai, unjustly jealous of that officer, sent his grandson Temur and another prince to supersede him; yet before their arrival, he had gained the victory. Our traveller, getting his information through Kaidu, might be mistaken on this point. De Guignes represents the seat of that prince's power as in Almaligh, to the north-east of Turfan, and among the tribes north of the Altai. Marco, on the contrary, here distinctly states it as immediately north of the Oxus, and Samarcand as his capital. All his particulars accord with this; the distance of forty days' journey to Karakorum; the combination with Barak in the invasion of Khorasan, and the accidental but evident notice of him in treating of Samarcand. Price, in fact, calls him (Keydu) Khan of Turkestan, and mentions an inroad by him into Khorasan (Mohammedan History, vol. ii. p. 605). I am convinced, then, Marco was right, and that the French writer merely, from the repeated attempts against Karakorum, concluded that his territory lay adjacent to that capital.

Kaidu continued thirty years powerful and formidable; but, in 1301, having been attacked by Temur, the successor of Kublai, he was defeated and died of grief, when his family submitted.—De Guignes, tome iii. pp. 194, 195.

news was spread wide through the surrounding countries, and I assure you many gentlemen came and made the trial, which was arranged in the following manner. The king, with many young nobles and ladies, assembled in the great hall of the palace, when the princess entered in a robe of cotton richly adorned, attended by youths similarly attired. The agreement was, that if the candidate prevailed and threw her to the ground, he should have her for his wife; but if victory declared on her side, he was to give her a hundred horses. Thus she had gained above ten thousand steeds, because she could find no youth or damosel that could overcome her; nor was this wonderful, for she was large, tall, and well-formed in her limbs, indeed almost a giantess. Now, about the year 1280, there came the son of a rich king, an extremely handsome young man, with a brilliant retinue and a thousand very fine horses. He addressed himself to Kaidu, who was very desirous of marrying him to his daughter. He therefore caused her to be privately dealt with, to allow herself to be conquered; but she declared she would not do so for any thing in the world. One day then, the king and queen, with many nobles and ladies, assembled in the great hall; the princess and prince then entered, and their handsome appearance struck all with wonder; he was really so strong and powerful, that no one else could contend with him. When they were in the middle of the hall before this great assembly, the agreement was formally made, that the suitor, if vanquished, should lose his thousand horses. But all the company, as well as the king and queen, expressed their wishes that he should be successful. The two then rushed together, and wrestled violently, dragging each other in different directions: but at last the lady prevailed, and threw him on the ground, to the great grief of all the spectators; he thus forfeited the thousand horses. But I have to inform you, that Kaidu led this daughter to many battles, and in no encounter could any warrior withstand her. On many occasions, she rushed among the enemy, seized one of

the chiefs, and dragged him over to her own army.* I will now, however, proceed to a great battle fought between her father and Argon, the son of Abaga, lord of the East.

XLVI.—Great Battle between Barak and Argon.

Abaga ruled many provinces bordering on those of Kaidu, and it was where grows the tree called in the book of Alexander the *Arbor Secco*.† As that prince committed great ravages on his territory, he sent his son Argon, with a very large host of cavalry, into the country of the Arbor Secco, to the river of Gihon, where he took a station fitted to guard the country against the invader. Kaidu, however, assembled a great body of horsemen, and gave the command to a brother named Barak, very brave and skilful, desiring him to oppose the enemy. Barak, with his troops, rode on till they came to the river, and were ten miles distant from Argon. The latter, informed of the approach of his adversary, made diligent preparation; the two remained three days in their respective camps. When they were fully prepared, and the naccar began to sound, they no longer delayed, but rushed furiously against each other. The arrows might be seen flying on all sides, and the air was so full of them, that it seemed to rain; and when both parties had discharged them, and many men as well as horses had been slain, they seized their swords

* The editor is obliged to say, that he has in vain searched the records of the East for any notice of this Herculean fair one; nor does Count Boni appear to have been more fortunate. But our information respecting Kaidu himself is so excessively slight, and only as connected with the history of Kublai, that we could not reasonably expect any mention of an incident of this merely domestic nature.

† Abaga, in 1283, succeeded Hoolaku, the conqueror of Bagdad, as lord of the East, or "of the Eastern Tartars," a rule which included the whole of Persia, with parts of Syria and Asia Minor. He is described as a wise and able prince. We have already observed, that the *arbor secco* means the plane-tree, considered characteristic of Khorasan, the most eastern province of Persia, and one of vast extent, reaching from the Caspian to the Oxus, called here Gihon.

and spears, and began a most fierce and cruel combat. Arms and legs were cut off, chargers killed, and many dreadful wounds inflicted; the noise and cries were such as would have drowned the loudest thunder. I assure you, in a few hours the ground was covered with dead and dying. Finally, Barak and his men could not endure the force of their adversary, and retreated across the river; while the victor pursued and killed a great number.* Thus Argon gained the day; and having begun to speak of him, I will relate his other adventures, and how he became sovereign lord after the death of Abaga, his father.

XLVII.—Argon and Acomat contend for the Persian Empire.

Not long after Argon had gained this battle, he received news of the death of Abaga. He was much grieved, yet prepared with his whole host to return to the court, and take possession of the sovereignty; but he had forty days to march before arriving there. Now a brother of the deceased monarch, named Acomat Soldan, who had become a Saracen, having heard of the event, bethought himself, that since the heir was so distant, he himself might succeed. Having prepared a large body of men, he marched directly to the capital, and seized the supreme power. He found such an amount of treasure, that it could scarcely be counted. He lavished his bounty in a wonderful manner on the chiefs and barons, who declared him a good master, liked him, and wished for no other. He studied to be popular, and to please all men; yet the action he had committed was

* This inroad is related by De Guignes, tome iii. p. 260, and by Price, Mohammedan History, vol. ii. p. 576. The former calls the invader Berrak Khan, the latter Berauk. They describe the battle as having taken place near Herat, but differ from our traveller in one important particular, representing Abaga himself as having commanded the army. Yet as Price recognises Argon as having been in possession of the government of Khorasan, there can be scarcely a doubt, that he would at least be present in the engagement. If we are correct in supposing the information derived from Ghazan, son to that prince, this cannot be denied to be a good authority.

vile, and blamed by many. It was not long till he learned that Argon was marching against him with a very powerful force. He made no delay, nor showed surprise, but actively summoned his barons and troops; and in a week he had assembled a numerous body of cavalry, who all marched cheerfully against Argon, expressing their earnest desire to kill or take him.

Soldan Acomat having thus assembled 60,000 horsemen, set out and marched full ten days without interruption, when he learned that Argon, with an equal force, was five days' journey distant. He pitched his camp and awaited the enemy in a large and beautiful plain, which seemed well adapted for the combat. He then summoned his people, and thus addressed them:—"My lords, you know how well I am entitled to succeed my brother, being son of the same father, and having accompanied him in all his conquests. Because Argon is son to Abaga, some think he ought to succeed; but with all due respect to them, I consider this unjust. Even during my brother's life, I was reasonably entitled to half the kingdom, only through my mildness I allowed him the whole, but now I ought to succeed. I pray you then to defend my right against Argon, and preserve to us the rule; for I seek only the name and dignity, and leave to you the profit and possession of all. I need say no more to wise men, who love justice, and will do all things for the general honour and benefit." When the barons, chiefs, and soldiers heard this speech, they declared with one consent their resolution to adhere to him while they had breath, and defend him against all, and particularly Argon, whom they trusted they would capture and place in his hands.

When that prince learned that his rival was waiting for him with so great a multitude, he was much discomposed; he considered, however, how injurious it would be to show melancholy or fear, and the necessity of displaying valour and boldness. He sent for his lords and counsellors, and having assembled a great number, thus addressed them:—"My dear brothers and friends, you know well

how tenderly my father loved you, regarding you while he lived as kindred and children ; also how many great battles you fought with him, aiding him to conquer all his kingdom. Now I am the son of him who loved you so much, and to me you are equally dear ; I therefore trust you will aid me against the man who seeks, contrary to all right and reason, to disinherit me. Consider also, that he has forsaken our law and embraced that of Mohammed ; it were fitting indeed that a Saracen should rule over the Tartar nation ! Therefore, friends and brothers, I trust that you will willingly and heartily support me, and that each will display such valour, that the battle may be ours, and we may comfort ourselves by thinking that the right is on our side." After this speech, each lord and chief thought to himself, that he ought rather to die than not strenuously endeavour to gain a triumph. While the rest were silent, one great lord arose and said :—" Noble sire, we know fully the truth of what you have said, and I will now answer in the name of all now present, that while life remains in our bodies, we are ready to die rather than fail to conquer. Victory, too, appears to us certain, since we are so greatly in the right, and our enemies in the wrong. I advise, then, that we march as soon as possible against the foe, and pray all our companions to display such valour, that their deeds may be spoken of over the whole world." That brave man having concluded, all present assented, and eagerly desired battle. Next morning, Argon and his troops began their march, riding towards the plain on which their enemies were posted, and pitched their camp ten miles distant from that of Acomat.

Argon now chose two intelligent men, in whom he greatly confided, and sent them to his uncle. They mounted on horseback, went direct, and alighted at the pavilion of the soldan, whom they found with a numerous company of barons. Being well acquainted, they saluted him courteously, and received a cheerful welcome. After some time, one of them rose and said,— " Noble sire, your nephew Argon wonders greatly at

your seizing his kingdom, and coming thus to fight against him. This is not good conduct, nor due from an uncle towards a nephew; he therefore courteously prays you to abstain, and desiring neither war nor quarrel, will respect you as superior and father, both of himself and of the whole country." Acomat answered,—"My lords messengers, my nephew is entirely mistaken; the land is mine, I conquered it along with his father. If he will consent, I will make him a great lord, endowing him with spacious estates, treating him as my son and the highest under myself; otherwise, be assured, I will endeavour to put him to death." The envoys then asked repeatedly, if they could hope for no other determination. He replied, never in his lifetime. They then departed, and rode to the camp of their lord, alighted at the tent, and told him his uncle's declaration.* Argon was greatly enraged, and said aloud in the hearing of all, that he would never live in comfort till the whole world had seen the signal vengeance he would take on his uncle. He said to his chiefs,—"Now let us without further delay march against these traitors and endeavour to destroy them." The night was spent in busy preparation; and Acomat Soldan, being warned by his spies, was equally active.

XLVIII.—Great Battle between them.

Next day Argon, having made all his arrangements, advanced in good order; while his antagonist, not waiting his arrival, led on his troops to the encounter. They soon met, and the two great hosts, who had much desired the battle, rushed without delay against each other. Arrows flew like rain, chiefs fell to the ground, the air resounded with the cries and lamentations of the wounded and dying. Their arrows being exhausted, they rushed on with swords and spears; arms, hands, and heads were cut off, and the noise would have drowned the loudest thunder. In that day many brave men

* The Paris Latin version terminates here abruptly, in the middle of the narrative.

died, and many ladies were left disconsolate. Argon assuredly displayed great prowess, and set a gallant example; but in vain,—fortune turned against him,—his men, compelled to flee, were pursued and slain in great numbers. Among the fugitives, he himself was captured, when the pursuers stopped and returned with him to their camp, rejoicing beyond measure. Acomat caused him to be imprisoned and carefully guarded; then, being of a voluptuous disposition, he returned to court to enjoy the society of his numerous and handsome wives. He instructed the commander of the host to guard the captive as himself, and return at leisure that his troops might not be fatigued. He then departed, while Argon remained in chains, and so grieved, that death appeared to him desirable.

XLIX.—Final Issue of the Contest.

Now there was a great and aged Tartar baron, who felt much pity for the prisoner, and bethought him how wicked it was to keep their lord in this condition. He resolved, therefore, to attempt his deliverance. He argued to this effect with many other chiefs, who, esteeming his wisdom, and conscious that he spake the truth, entirely agreed with him. Then Boga, who had made the proposal, Elcidai, Togan, Tegana, Taga, Tiar Oulatai, and Samagar, all went to the tent of the captive prince. The first, as the eldest and the leader, addressed him thus,—"Noble prince, we are now fully sensible of having acted wickedly towards you, and have determined to return to the right path; we will therefore deliver and own you as justly our liege lord." Argon, who thought they were mocking him, was both grieved and angry. "My lords," said he, "you have done wrong enough in seizing your sovereign and making him a captive. Pray depart, and do not also make him a subject of mockery." "Illustrious prince," said Boga, "we positively speak the truth, and will make oath to it according to our law." Then all the barons swore that they would obey him as their lord, while he in

return bound himself in no degree to resent past wrongs, but hold each of them as dear as Abaga his father had done. They then freed him from his chains, and did homage to him. He now ordered them to discharge their arrows against the tent of the melic; and that chief, named Soldan, who was the first after Acomat, and the commander of the whole host, was quickly slain.

Finding himself thus lord of all, he gave orders to march to the court, and was instantly obeyed. One day, thereafter, when Acomat was holding a splendid festival in his palace, a messenger came to him and said,—"Sire, I bring you with regret unwelcome tidings; the barons have delivered Argon, owned him as lord, and killed Soldan your faithful friend. They are coming now with their utmost speed to take and slay you." He was then silent, but the other was completely amazed and terrified. However, as a bold and brave man, he ordered the messenger not to say a word to a living creature; then mounting on horseback, set out with a few trusty servants, to seek refuge with the Sultan of Babylon, leaving all in ignorance whither he had gone. After marching six days, he came to the only pass by which he could penetrate. The commander who guarded it knew him, and seeing him fleeing with only a few adherents, determined to seize him. Acomat entreated for mercy, and offered a great treasure as the price of liberty; but the other, being greatly attached to Argon, replied that the wealth of the world would not prevent his placing him in his master's hands. He prepared a large company, and set out with his captive, watching him so carefully as to make escape impossible. They rode on to the court, where Argon had arrived only three days before, and been much vexed to find that his uncle had escaped; but when the guardian of the pass brought the fugitive before his presence, he felt the greatest possible joy. He received the latter sternly, telling him that he would meet with the treatment he deserved; and without asking any one's advice, he commanded him to be led forth and slain. This mandate was speedily exe-

cuted, and the body was thrown into a place where it was never seen more.* Thus have you heard the whole affair of Argon and of Acomat his uncle.

L.—Reign of Argon.

Argon was thus master of the palace and of the kingdom, and the barons from every quarter came to render him due homage and obedience. After governing some time, he sent Casan his son with 30,000 men, to the country of the Arbor Secco, there to guard and secure his land and people. Argon began his reign in the year 1286, after Acomat had ruled two years. The former, after holding the sceptre six years, died, not without strong suspicions of poison.†

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* This train of events is related by all the oriental authorities, but with considerable variations both from each other and from our author. D'Herbelot (*voc.* Argon) represents the prince, after the election of his uncle, as fleeing into Khorasan, then defeated, not by Ahmed (Acomat) in person, but by Alinak, his general; as not taken in battle, but fleeing to a fortress, where that officer by fair promises induced him to surrender, and then made him prisoner. His deliverance by the Emir Bougha, and the other events, pretty closely agree. The account given by De Guignes (tome iii. p. 264) is nearly similar to the above. Haithon represents the sultan himself (called Mahomet, as pursuing the prince into his mountain-fortress, capturing and delivering him to be guarded by his general. But Price (Mohammedan History, vol. ii. p. 578-582) gives the most detailed and, it should seem, most carefully investigated narrative; and it comes much closer to that of our traveller. He confirms his possession of the government of Khorasan, and the sultan having marched against him in person, but reports the prince as defeated by an advance-guard of 15,000 men, and made prisoner by Alinak (Ally Eynauk). The return of the sultan, the interview of *Bouka* with Argon, and his surprise of the general's tent, are related nearly as here. Ahmed, however, is represented (not very probably) as refusing to flee, and thus falling into the hands of his nephew, who delivered him to the sons of a chief whom he had killed, and who speedily put him to death. Considering these wide discrepancies in the best historical records, and the peculiar opportunities of Marco, I cannot think it at all improbable that his narrative may come nearer to the truth than any other.

† I do not observe these suspicions in any other narrative. It does, however, appear, that Argon had become unpopular, and his death was somewhat sudden. Ghazan, who viewed his

LI.—Reign of Quiacatu.

When Argon was dead, his uncle, named Quiacatu, brother to Abaga, immediately seized the throne, which was easily effected, as Casan was distant at the Arbor Secco. The latter, when informed of these events, was much grieved at the death of his parent, and still more incensed at Quiacatu having seized his inheritance. He was afraid, however, to march at once against him, but resolved, that at the proper time and place he would take as signal vengeance as his father had done on Acomat.* Thus Quiacatu obtained general obedience, except over the troops whom Casan immediately commanded. He married the wife of Argon his nephew, and indulged largely in the pleasures of the seraglio. At the end of two years, however, his death ensued, being occasioned by poison.†

LII.—Contest between Baidu and Ghazan.

Baidu, his uncle, and a Christian, then seized the sovereignty, and was generally obeyed, unless by Casan and his army. The latter, on learning these things, regretted much that he had not been able to punish Quiacatu, but determined to take such vengeance on Baidu, that the world might admire it. He marched without delay against

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successors in a hostile light, might be disposed to be jealous on this subject.

* These feelings are not stated in the histories, and indeed, under the circumstances, would doubtless be concealed; but they are highly probable, and likely to be communicated to the Poli, with whom Ghazan was on so friendly a footing.

† This prince occurred to us formerly under the name of Kaikhatu, as receiving the Poli and their two fair charges, on their first arrival from China. He is characterized by De Guignes (who calls him Kandgiatou), as irreligious, perjured, and debauched, yet ruling with justice. After displaying at first some vigour, he abandoned himself to profligate habits, and so disgusted the chiefs, that a general confederacy was formed against him. His unpopularity rendered it impossible to make any serious resistance; he was taken and put to death (De Guignes, tome iii. p. 266. Price, vol. ii. p. 599-601). Poison was a very likely mode of effecting this object; though we do not find the assertion made any where else.

that chief, who, informed of his approach, assembled a great force, and marched ten days' journey to meet him, when he encamped, and awaited his adversary, earnestly exhorting and encouraging his troops. In two days Casan came up, and immediately a battle began, most bloody and desperate; but it was vain for Baidu to struggle, since, as soon as the contest commenced, many of his men went over and fought on the side of his opponent. He was accordingly discomfited, and killed. Casan, thus victorious, immediately marched to court and assumed the sovereignty, when all the barons paid him homage and obedience; and this was in the year 1294.* Thus have you heard the whole train of affairs from Abaga down to Casan. You must likewise know that Alau, who conquered Bagdad, and was brother to Kublai, was ancestor to all the princes now named; for he was the father of Abaga, grandfather of Argon, who was the parent of Casan, now reigning. Having told you all about these Tartars of the East, I might go on to treat of Great Turkey; but the truth is, I have done so already, mentioning all the acts of Kaidu, so that I have nothing more to say, and shall therefore now tell you of the provinces and people that lie to the northward.

LIII.—Of Conci and his Northern Kingdom.

In this quarter is a king named Conci. He and all his people are Tartars, and adhere to the rudest and most brutal customs of that nation, never having changed since the time of Gengis Khan.† They have a god of

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* Baidu is stated in the histories to have been a grandson of Hoolaku, in which case he must have been nephew, not uncle to Kaikhatu; but we have found our author before not very precise upon these points. De Guignes and Price mention several negotiations between the two claimants; but both agree with our author, that the final downfal of Baidu was occasioned by the union of the chiefs against him, and in favour of his rival, whose more legitimate claim was already supported by a high reputation and brilliant talents.—De Guignes, vol. iii. p. 269. Price, vol. ii. p. 601.

† There is little or no doubt that this is the dynasty which De Guignes calls Touran, or of Siberia, tome i. p. 290, 291. He

felt, named Nacigai, to whom they also give a wife, calling these two lords of the earth, who guard all their corn, beasts, and landed property; and when they get any victuals, they anoint with them the mouth of these deities. The king is independent, being of the imperial lineage of Gengis, and a near relation of the great khan. He has neither cities nor castles, but his people reside in vast plains, diversified with valleys and mountains. They are very submissive to him, and he successfully studies to preserve among them peace and union.* They have no grain, but live on milk and cattle, which abound, including camels, horses, oxen, sheep, and other animals. There are also bears, white all over, and longer than twenty palms, with foxes, large and black; likewise a great number of sables, whose costly skins I have mentioned as worth each a thousand bezants. The rats of Pharaoh are plentiful, and very large, affording food to the people during the whole summer. In short, all kinds of wild beasts abound in this savage and trackless region. I must also mention, that this king has a country in which horses cannot travel, on account of the numerous lakes and fountains, and the quantity of ice and mud. This rugged tract extends thirteen days' journey, and at the end of each is a post-house to accommodate the messengers, with about forty dogs, almost as large as asses, to convey them from one post to the other. As wheeled carriages cannot travel here, they employ sledges, so formed as to move over the surface without

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mentions that Baatu, after the conquest of Moscow, intrusted a body of troops to his son Scheibani, who established himself on the mountains of Arall (Ural), and thence extended his dominion over Siberia. The name here given does not occur in the list of its princes; yet De Guignes mentions Conzi as one of the sons of Scheibani. Ramusio, after omitting the preceding chapters, has inserted the present one, but is led by the similarity of name into the strange blunder of confounding this peaceful prince with the fierce and restless Kaidu, on which Mr Marsden has founded some very misplaced comments.

* This sentence is not in the French edition, but being in the Paris Latin and Crusca, as well as Ramusio, appears genuine.

sinking; such, indeed, as are used in this country to convey hay and straw when there is great rain and mud. On the sledge is spread a bear's skin, whereon the messenger sits, and the dogs drag it direct to the following post. The guardian mounts a similar carriage, and guides him by the best and nearest way. At the next post, they find another relay of sledges and dogs, and the one which conveyed them returns. The men dwelling in this wild country are very expert hunters, capturing many precious little animals, such as sables, ermines, and black foxes, whose skins yield a large profit. They have engines so well contrived that no animal can escape. But owing to the extreme cold, all their habitations are under ground.* Having nothing more to mention, we shall depart and treat of a place where there is perpetual twilight.

LIV.—The Region of Obscurity.

You must know, that beyond this kingdom is a province called Obscurity, because there never appears either sun, moon, or star; but it is always dark, as with us during twilight.† The people have no ruler, but live like brutes. The Tartars, however, make occasional in-

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* To those at all acquainted with Siberia, it need scarcely be remarked how very accurate is the description here given both of its pastoral and frozen regions; the beautiful furs; the white or polar bear; the sledges drawn by large dogs; the subterraneous habitations.

† Instead of this, Ramusio says, "during most of the winter the sun is invisible, and the atmosphere is obscured, as it appears to us at the dawn of day, when we see very imperfectly." He adds afterwards, "the inhabitants take advantage of the summer season, *when they enjoy continual daylight*, to catch," &c. These statements are in no early edition, and I cannot help thinking that they betray the additional information derived from voyages performed long after into the northern regions. The Crusca goes very far, representing the darkness as complete, and the night perpetual; a statement which dismays Count Boni, and arose probably from some misunderstanding of the original. I incline to think the French the most correct, and that the constant twilight mentioned arises rather from dense fogs on the shores of the northern ocean, than from the position on the earth's surface.

roads in the following manner:—They ride on mares that have just brought forth foals, which last are left at the border. They then traverse the country, plundering whatever they can find; and when they wish to return, the mares, seeking to find their young, know the way better than the riders.* The people are all hunters, and take great numbers of sables, black foxes, and other animals with costly furs. Those on their frontier meet them at a fixed period, purchase these skins, and sell them elsewhere with an ample profit. These people are tall and well made, but pale and colourless. The territory borders on one side upon Great Russia, of which I shall now proceed to speak.

LV.—Description of Russia and several adjacent Countries.

Russia is a very great province towards the north, inhabited by Christians, who follow the Greek Church. They have languages of their own, and several kings. They are a very simple people, but extremely handsome, with a fair complexion. The entrances and passes into it are very strong; they own some small allegiance to the Tartar king of the West, named Toctai. The country yields few commodities, except an abundance of the furs already described, equal to any in the world. There are considerable silver mines. But now let us leave it, and describe the Greater Sea, with the provinces around. But first let me tell you of a province lying between north and north-west, and bordering on Russia, named Lac, inhabited by a mixture of Christians and Saracens, and subject to a king. The people carry on merchandise and manufactures, and have a vast variety also of valuable furs.† But now I must go back to

* There is no modern record of such predatory inroads, but the country has been long held by Russia, a civilized and powerful government, which would not permit such lawless proceedings. Neither is there any other mention of this curious mode of finding their way back; but, no doubt, under these circumstances, the animals would trace it better than the riders.

† Count Boni thinks Lac (Lacca, *Crusca*) to be Poland, the inhabitants of which, he says, own Lech for their progenitor.

Russia, and mention something that I had forgot. It is so very extensive as to reach the ocean, where are isles on which pilgrim-falcons and gerfalcons are found, and carried to various parts of the world. Now from Russia to Oroech is no great distance; but the extreme cold renders the journey very difficult.* This would be the time to speak of the Strait of Constantinople and the mouth of the Great Sea; but on considering that many others have written on the subject, we shall omit them, and proceed to treat of the Tartars of the West, and the lords by whom they are ruled.

LVI.—Succession of Western Tartar Princes.

The first lord of these Tartars was Sain, a very great and powerful king. He conquered Russia, Comania, Alania, Lac, Mengiar, Zic, Gucia, and Gazaria. The inhabitants had all been Comanian; but having no unity or connexion, lost their country, and were driven into various parts of the world, while those who remained became servants of this conqueror. After him reigned successively Patu, Barka, Mungletemur, Totamongur, and Toctai, the present sovereign.† Having thus re-

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Yet, though Poland was well known in that age, and traversed, as we have seen, by contemporary travellers, this name is never found applied to it. It is stated, too, to be partly inhabited by Saracens (Mohammedans), which might, it is said, refer to Baatu's expedition; but his troops were not Mussulmans, and they retired in a body, leaving not one behind. The Count's version (the Crusca) wants the sentence about Constantinople, whence the position W.N.W. appears to be from Russia; but this is here supplied from the French, and if genuine, Lac must bear that direction from the imperial capital. I incline to think it Moldavia and Bessarabia, not then subject to Russia, and to which Mohammedans might have penetrated.

* In the Crusca, it is Orbeche, in the Pucci, Osbech; whence Count Boni supposes it to mean the Uzbeks. The French editor, however, has in the margin Norvège (Norway), with which suggestion I incline to concur. The country seems spoken of as one known to Europeans; while the other would be too distant. Neither Lac nor Oroech are in Ramusio; so that we have no aid from Mr Marsden.

† This list is tolerably correct, if we except a great error at the outset, by which Sain and Patu (Baatu) are represented as

counted the kings of the Western Tartars, I will now describe a great battle fought between Alau, lord of the East, and Barka, lord of the West, with the occasion which led to it.

LVII.—Dispute between Barka and Hoolaku.

You must know that about the year 1261 there arose a great discord between these two monarchs. It was about a province on their respective frontier which each desired and would not yield, but resolved to seize it and see who would oppose him. Thereupon they declared war, summoned their respective subjects, and made the greatest preparation almost ever known. I assure you, in six months each had assembled full 300,000 horsemen, well provided with every warlike implement. Alau, lord of the East, then set out with all his troops, and having rode many days, reached a wide plain between the Iron Gates and the Sea of Sarain. There he pitched his camp, which, I have heard, contained many rich tents, and made a splendid appearance. Being here on the frontier, he resolved to wait, and see if Barka would come. That prince having completed his preparations, and learned the approach of his foe, without delay began his march. He rode on till he came to the great plain where his enemy was posted, and pitched his camp at ten miles' distance. I declare to you, it was fully as beautiful as that of Alau, filled with tents and pavilions of cloth of gold. His army, too, was more

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distinct princes ; whereas these are only different names of the same great warrior, with whom our readers must now be pretty well acquainted. De Guignes, tome i. p. 287, calls him Batou Sain ; Abulghasi, p. 195, Batu Sager. The appellations, however, are so strikingly dissimilar, that we cannot much wonder at their being considered applicable to different persons. De Guignes' list is as follows :—Batou Sain died in 1256 ; Bereke, 1266 ; Toudan Mangou, 1287 ; *Toulabouga*, 1291 ; Toghtagou (called by the Russians Toctais), 1313. The subsequent names, with the usual variations, agree with those of our author, except in the absence of Tolobuga ; but he will come in our way again, when we shall have occasion to make some curious observations respecting him.

numerous, amounting, without a lie, to 350,000 horsemen.* They rested two days in their tents, when Barka thus addressed his men :—" Noble chiefs, you know how, since coming to the sovereignty, I have loved you as brothers and sons ; you have accompanied me in many great battles, and aided in conquering much territory. Alau, a great and powerful prince, proposes wrongfully to fight against us ; but having the right on our side, we may confidently expect to conquer, especially since our army is more numerous. In this confidence, then, noble chiefs, and having come so far for battle, let us prepare in three days to engage, arranging so wisely, and displaying such valour, that our fame may spread over the world." He was then silent ; and we must now return to his antagonist, who, when he heard of his adversary's arrival with so great an army, assembled his principal men and said :—" Noble brethren and friends, you have throughout all my life supported and aided me, enabling me to conquer in many battles ; nor indeed ever fighting one in which we were not victorious. We have come here to combat the great Barka, who indeed has as many and even more troops ; but ours are braver, and I feel confident of victory. I rejoice, then, to hear by the spies, that he is coming to give us battle in three days, and I expect every one to be well prepared, with his accustomed bravery, rather to die on the field with honour, than to suffer disgrace and discomfiture."

LVIII. – Great Battle between them.

On the appointed day Alau rose early, summoned his men to arms, and ranged them very skilfully in order of battle. He formed thirty squadrons, each containing 10,000 horsemen, making in all the number of 300,000,

* These numbers are no doubt exaggerated ; but this I apprehend to be the case in all the histories of the middle ages, especially of the East. Haithon represents Hochtai (Toctai), a successor of Barka, as able to bring into the field 600,000 horsemen.

with able leaders and captains. By his order his squadrons then advanced at a moderate pace over the plain, till they arrived mid-way between the two camps, where they stopped and awaited the enemy. On the same morning, Barka similarly arranged his men, forming thirty-five squadrons of 10,000 each, with good officers and commanders. He then made his troops ride forward to within half a mile of the enemy, when they halted, and again proceeded till the hosts, being within two bow-shots of each other, stopped and arranged their squadrons. The plain was the largest and finest in all that country; which, assuredly, was very necessary to afford a field of battle for such mighty armies, amounting to 650,000 men. Indeed Alau and Barka were the most powerful princes in the world, and were near relations too,—being both of the imperial lineage of Gengis Khan.

The two great kings with all their troops being thus marshalled, impatiently waited for the naccar as a signal of battle. When it sounded, the armies rushed forward and discharged arrows against each other. The air was filled, and the sky became invisible; numbers of men and horses fell to the earth, which was covered with dead and dying. The arrows being exhausted, they struck dreadful blows with swords and spears; assuredly there had not for a long time been a battle in the world fought by such numerous armies. Alau, most brave and powerful in arms, showed himself this day worthy of ruling a kingdom and wearing a crown. He displayed signal prowess in his own person, and by his example infused extraordinary courage into his men. His achievements, indeed, astonished both friends and enemies; he appeared, not a man, but thunder and tempest. Barka, too, fought most bravely, and made himself worthy of the admiration of the whole world; but it was all in vain; his men were either killed, or so overwhelmed and exhausted, that they could endure no longer. When evening arrived, they fled with their utmost speed. The victor and his troops rapidly pur-

sued, and after committing dreadful slaughter returned, threw aside their arms, and had their wounds washed and dressed. They were, indeed, quite overpowered and exhausted. The night was spent in repose, and next day he ordered all the dead bodies both of friends and enemies to be burned. He then returned into his country with all the troops who survived the battle; for I assure you, although he conquered, he had lost a vast number, yet still more had fallen on the opposite side.* Having told you thus of Alau and his victory, we shall go on to treat of a battle between the Tartars of the west.

LIX.—Controversy between the Tartar Princes, Toctai and Nogai.

†You must know that in this quarter the great lord

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* This war is narrated in all the oriental histories; yet it must be confessed with very wide variations. D'Herbelot (*voc.* Abaka) and De Guignes (tome iii. pp. 258, 259) mention no hostilities till after Hoolaku had been succeeded by Abaga, who sent his son Schamat to Derbend against Barka. That prince is said to have gained a signal victory, which did not, however, prevent his opponent from speedily returning with an immense force; but death put an end to his further proceedings. Yet these writers incidentally notice, that some years before Barka had formed an alliance with Egypt, and carried on operations which had led to severe losses on the side of Syria. Haithon of Armenia (Purchas, vol. iii. p. 117), whose local position makes him a good authority, states Hoolaku as personally engaged in a great battle against Barka. Mr Price relates a series of transactions conducted by that prince, who, after several encounters near Schamachie, on December 1264, surprised and defeated Barka, who then retreated. The army pursued; but, through want of caution, allowed themselves to be in their turn surprised; and, while retreating across the Terek, the ice broke and a number were drowned. But the date is 1264, three years later than our author's. Now Price mentions that Barka commenced his invasion in 1260, but that no steps were taken to check it till 1264 (Mohammedan History, vol. ii. p. 571). We cannot but think this very improbable, and that there must be here a blank in oriental history, which, indeed, respecting all this series of events, is extremely defective. This would be supplied by the present narrative, which represents Hoolaku, as might be expected, marching immediately against the invader, and giving him so severe a repulse as might make him discontinue all operations till 1264, when he might return with recruited strength.

† The following chapters are found in the early French ver-

of the Tartars was named Mongutemur, and he was succeeded by Tolobuga, a very young man. Totamangu, a powerful chief, aided by a king named Nogai,* killed that prince and succeeded to the sovereignty. He died, however, soon after, and in his room was elected Toctai, a very wise and able chief. Meantime, two sons of the slain monarch having grown up to manhood, and being wise and prudent, assembled a large body of troops, and marched to the court of Toctai. They went and threw themselves on their knees before him, when

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sion, but not in any other printed one, nor in any manuscript to which we have had access, except the Italian in the Museum. A question may therefore be raised as to their genuineness. Besides, however, the high character of the edition, the style is exactly the same, though the statements are somewhat more loose and careless; but, indeed, they have been so during several preceding chapters. The outline of the information is confirmed, as elsewhere, by good oriental authorities. We have pointed out the motives which led transcribers and translators to the system of abridgment by simple omission, and how these became always stronger as the work drew to its close. The different editions, accordingly, have been dropping off one after another; and only the Crusca comes down to the present point. There is also an Italian MS. in the Royal Library at Paris, which, from the list of names published by the Geographical Society (p. 552), appears to do so. The Italian MS. in the Museum, besides containing an abridged narrative of the succeeding events, affords a strong corroboration of their having been included in the original narrative.

* De Guignes gives an account of the rise of the dynasty of Nogai (whom he calls Nogaia), and from whom probably a numerous tribe of Tartars derive their appellation. Being employed with a strong force to keep in check certain northern tribes, he threw off the yoke of his master, and having married a natural daughter of the Emperor Michel Paleologus, assumed the title and rank of a sovereign. This author agrees in making him accessory to the murder of Tolobuga; but he represents Toctai as his accomplice, and thereby placed on the throne, making Totamangu the predecessor of the murdered prince. On this subject, however, see the next note. That Toctai might become the bitter enemy of the person who had raised him to the throne is not without example in the annals of ambition; yet our author's account seems the more probable one. The two princes could never have come to solicit redress for their father's death from him who was its chief author. De Guignes, it is true, has no such incident; but there seems difficulty in supposing it to be a complete fiction.

he bid them welcome, and desired them to rise. The two youths then stood up, when the eldest began to speak thus:—"Noble sire, we come as sons of Totamangu, who was killed by Tolobuga and Nogai.* The former being dead, we can say nothing; but we seek vengeance on Nogai, and pray that you, as his rightful lord, make him appear and account for the death of our father." The youth was then silent, and Toctai, feeling that he had spoken truth, replied,—"My noble friend, I will willingly do what you ask." He then sent two messengers with this injunction to Nogai, who laughed at it, and positively refused to come. They rode back and reported this answer, when their master, much enraged, said in the hearing of all around him,—"If God aid me, either Nogai shall obey my mandate, or I will march with all my men to destroy him." He then sent two other messengers, who rode to the court of the Tartar, presented themselves, and saluted him. He bid them

* I am obliged to notice here a gross inconsistency in the French text. Before, it was Totamangu who killed Tolobuga; now it is the reverse; and this second version is carried through the whole succeeding narrative. According to it, the order of the sovereigns will agree with De Guignes, who places Totamangu first; and as this order is given in two different parts of his work, drawn from different authorities, it is probably correct (vol. i. p. 287; tome iii. pp. 346, 347). The transition in the original is curiously made:—"Or avint qe endementier deus filz de Tolobuga qe occis avoit esté, furent creu et estoient homes qe bien pooient porter armes. Il estoient sajes e provens: cesti deus freres, *ce furent les filz de Totamangu.*" I cannot but suspect that this is a rough way of acknowledging his error, and taking up the real state of the case. The Museum MS. indeed carries out through the whole the first statement of Tolobuga as the murdered prince, and his sons as seeking redress. The French, however, is undoubtedly the earliest version, and the Italian transcriber, on seeing the discrepancy, might naturally seek to remove it by continuing the first statement, supposing it the most correct. There appears reason to think that the contrary is the truth; an opinion which seems farther confirmed by De Guignes' report (tome iii. pp. 346, 347), that Tolobuga had nearly usurped the supreme power even in the lifetime of Totamangu, who, unable to control his turbulent chiefs, resigned the crown. This is not very far from the statement of Marco; for in such a society, the abdication of a monarch and his death were not likely to be very distant.

welcome, when one of them said,—" Noble sire, Toctai gives warning, that unless you come to his court to account for your conduct to the sons of Totamangu, he will march against you with all his people, and do you all the injury in his power; therefore be careful what you do in this business, and what message you send." The other wrathfully replied,—" Gentlemen, return to your lord, and tell him from me, that I little dread the threatened war, and am ready to come and meet him half-way." The messengers, on hearing this speech, without delay set out, and rode till they came to their master, and told him all that Nogai had said. Seeing that war was inevitable, he immediately sent his messengers to all his subjects, and summoned them to prepare and march against his adversary. And what shall I say? He assembled the greatest armament in the world. When the Tartar prince heard this, he also made great preparations; but his people being less numerous, he could not assemble an equal army; however it was very powerful.

When Toctai was fully ready to take the field, he set out, leading with him, I assure you, two hundred thousand horsemen. He rode on to the large and beautiful plain of Nerghi, and there pitched his camp. Hither also came the two sons of Totamangu, with a noble company of men, to avenge the death of their father. Now let us turn to Nogai, who on learning his approach set out with all his troops, and, without doubt, they were upwards of 150,000 horsemen, all good and valiant, better men at arms than those of the enemy. Two days after, he arrived and pitched his camp at ten miles distance. On both sides were seen very rich tents and pavilions of cloth of gold, fully displaying the wealth of these kings. They then waited a short time on the plain for refreshment and repose.

LX.—Great Battle.

Toctai now assembled his people, and spoke as follows:—" My lords, we have come to fight King Nogai, and with great reason, since all this feud and enmity

have arisen from his not coming to account for his conduct to the sons of Totamangu. Since then his behaviour is thus unreasonable, we must feel good courage and hope of conquest; and I earnestly pray that each man be valiant, and strive to carry destruction and death among the enemy." The other, too, thus addressed his men:— "Noble friends and brethren, you know how many great and hard battles we have gained, and against better men than now oppose us; therefore you may feel assured of victory. Besides, we are fully in the right, and he in the wrong; for, as you know well, he is not my lord, nor entitled to call me to his court to give an account to others. I say no more, but pray every one to perform such exploits, that the whole world may admire them, and your name may always strike terror." The two kings, having thus spoken, made no delay in forming their order of battle. The first drew out twenty squadrons, and his enemy fifteen, of 10,000 men each, with good captains and conductors. Having rode on to within bow-shots, and the naccar having sounded, they rushed forward and discharged their arrows, when many horses and riders fell dead, loud cries arose, and tears were shed. Afterwards they all advanced with sword and spear; hands, heads, and arms were cut off; knights fell dead and wounded to the earth; the cries, noise, and clashing of arms, would have drowned the loudest thunder. Never almost was there a battle in which such numbers fell; but the greater loss was on the side of Toctai, for his adversary had better men-at-arms. The two sons of Totamangu displayed great prowess, striving to the utmost to avenge the death of their father; but it was in vain. The battle, in short, was most bloody and dreadful; many who in the morning were alive and vigorous, during the day fell slain, and many happy wives were made widows. Toctai strove with all his might to support his people and his honour, and displayed indeed a prowess worthy to be praised by the whole world. He rushed amid the enemy like one that cared nothing for life or death, striking to right and left, rescuing his

people when seized or taken. He did much injury that day both to enemies and friends; of the one he killed a vast number, and the other, from his example, derived boldness to push against their foe, and thus met instant death. Nogai, on his side, equally acted the hero; he rushed among the enemy as the lion does among other wild beasts, casting down and killing all whom he encountered. He threw himself among the thickest of the foe, and all fled before him like weak and timid animals. His troops emulated his valour; but why make a long story? The people of Toctai did every thing possible to support their honour, though in vain, for they had too good and stout men to deal with. They had suffered so much as to make it evident that if they remained they would all perish. They therefore took to flight as quickly as they could, the victor with his troops pursuing and killing them in great numbers. Thus have you heard how Nogai gained the battle, and be assured there died in it 60,000 men; but the other king escaped, as well as the two sons of Totamangu.*

LXI.—Conclusion.

You have now been informed of all the actions of the Tartars and Saracens, of their customs, and of other countries throughout the world, so far as they could be searched out and discovered. We have only declined saying any thing of the Black Sea and the surrounding provinces, although we fully explored them, because it

* De Guignes relates the events of this war, but, as already observed, he does not introduce the two princes, sons of Totamangu or Tolobuga, but represents Toctai as impelled merely by jealousy of his neighbour or vassal, and a determination to humble him. There is a still more serious discrepancy; for, instead of representing Nogai as victorious, he reports him as defeated and killed. Yet it is remarkable, that in another part of his work he mentions him, on the authority of Abulfeda, as having lived many years after, and died only in 1299. He notices himself the variation of the two accounts, but does not seem able to say which is right. We confess ourselves equally at a loss; but it would be hard to decide against our author on such varying authority.

would seemingly have been useless, and a repetition of what others relate every day. The Venetians, the Genoese, the Pisans, and many other nations, are continually navigating it, so that every one knows the bordering countries. You have been informed in a chapter at the beginning, of our departure from the great khan, and the trouble and solicitation which Maffio, Nicolo, and Marco had in obtaining his permission. You have learned also the accident whereby it was procured, without which we should have found it very difficult to return into our country. But I believe it was the pleasure of God, that they might make known the great things that are in the world, and, as formerly declared in the preface, there never was a man, either Christian or Saracen, or Tartar or Pagan, who explored so much of the world as did Marco, the son of Nicolo Polo, that noble and great citizen of Venice.* Deo Gratias. Amen, Amen.

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* This concluding address is given by Count Boni from the Crusca and Pucci editions, where alone it occurs, and with some variation of language. Considering how the other editions have dropped off before coming to this point, we cannot wonder at its absence in any of them except the French, which stops abruptly at the close of the preceding chapter. This circumstance, though difficult to account for, seems insufficient to make us reject a passage supported by two such valuable editions. We may observe a curious change in the last sentence, from the first to the third person. This, I apprehend, arises from Rusticians first writing as an amanuensis, then beginning in his own person, when he pronounces a panegyric upon Marco, which would not have come very gracefully from the traveller himself.

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